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BARNABY PALMS "FEELING HIS WAY."

Published by Henry Colburn, Great Marlborough Street, 183

MEN OF CHARACTER.

BY

DOUGLAS JERROLD.

"We must admonish thee, my worthy friend (for, perhaps, thy heart may be better than thy head), not to condemn a character as a bad one, because it is not perfectly a good one. If thou dost delight in these models of perfection, there are books enow written to gratify thy taste; but as we have not in the course of our conversation, ever happened to meet with any such person, we have not chosen to introduce any such here."

FIELDING.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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ISAAC CHEEK:

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CHAPTER I.

"BRIGHT was the sun, and clear that morrowing," when Isaac Cheek for the first time stood in the parlour of Mr. Cox. In one hand he held a letter of introduction—in the other, a white hat; or, as we incline to believe, originally a black one, become white with reverend old age. Isaac stood in a most advantageous posture, his legs being adroitly disposed to hide an ignominious patch in trowsers evidently made for the wearer ere he had attained his full growth. His coat was not so much buttoned, as hauled, up to the chin; with no relief of linen, no manipulated flax, to turn forth "its silver lining" on the beholder.

"Mr. Cox will be with you directly," said Sarah. "Sir" was at the tip of her tongue, but a sudden glance at the visitor from head to heel made her withhold the superfluity.

Mr. Cox entered the room, and seeing a biped standing reverently on the carpet, benevolently coughed to give the poor man courage, and then held forth his hand to receive the missive. Isaac, essaying a smile, trod as though he walked upon lamb's wool, and then timidly placed the letter in the hand of Cox, who, as he took it, twitched his face as if he had received a stinging-nettle. He opened the paper with the tips of his fingers,—and, his nose slightly curled as if he feared the plague from the contents, declined his rigid lids upon the writing. He read aloud:—

"My dear Cox,—The bearer of this is really a very clever fellow. Don't judge him by his husk, which you will at once perceive to be not very promising. If you can employ him in any way, *do;* for I can assure you, though outwardly a shabby dog, he is, take him altogether, a thorough-going chap—in truth, a man of wax. Yours truly.

"JOHN ROBINSON."

As Cox delivered these contents—and he trolled them over the tongue very sonorously—Isaac Cheek, with an air of conscious worth, passed his hand around his hat, in an ostentatious but vain attempt to smooth the beaver—and when Cox repeated,—which with fine sensibility he thrice did—"a shabby dog," Isaac pulled up the collar of his coat to repel the insinuation.

"And pray, sir, what can you do?"

Isaac had not dined for the last three days; he was therefore fully justified in saying—"Any thing, sir."—No—never since the invention of speech, did man put more bowels into an answer.

"Umph!—ha!—well—just now, I happen to want a—a secretary," observed Cox, dropping himself into an easy chair.

Isaac smiled from ear to ear; and, forgetting the patch, drew himself erect, and placed his hand upon his breast.

"Were you ever in Persia?" asked Cox.

Isaac paused to recollect whether he ever had been at Ispahan. "Not yet," he at length modestly replied.

"Do you know any thing of chemistry?"

Again Isaac smiled a terrible gash in his face; and hoping that the gesture might be translated to his advantage, was silent.

"Very well: and, of course, you keep accounts?" Isaac smiled for the third time. "And you can transact foreign correspondence?" Isaac smiled, but very weakly. "German, French, Italian, a trifle of Dutch, and if you have a seasoning of Russian, why—why, all the better?" Isaac bowed in acquiescence to that opinion. "For the truth is," said Cox, negligently, "I have a great deal to do with many crowned heads. Indeed, pretty

nearly all of them have, in their time, passed through my hands."

Isaac felt himself dilate, sublimed with respect.

"As for salary Mr.——, by the way, what is your name?"

"Cheek, sir—Cheek," and Isaac again coaxed his coat closer to his chin.

"A very odd name. Well, Mr. Cheek, as I have said, we perfectly understand the matter of salary and—as the office is a place of highest trust,—if you can produce any vouchers for your moral conduct—do you know any clergymen?—I think I may say the secretaryship is yours."

Cheek this time bowed so suddenly and so profoundly, that the door—to which he had gradually receded—open at his back, struck by the act of homage, closed with a loud report. "For my moral character, I flatter myself that—yes, sir, I think I can promise"—and here Cheek nodded his head on one side, widened his nostrils, and struck one heel against the other, with an air of the most perfect satisfaction.

"No doubt—no doubt," said the liberal Cox, apparently fully convinced by the self-assurance of Isaac. What you have said is quite sufficient—consider yourself in office. Bless me! what a head is mine!—I had almost forgotten—would you run with this?—I'll direct it—'tis for Miss Buckleby and

it is most particular that she should immediately have it, for in her own words, 'life and death depend on it.' Ha! Mr. Cheek," continued Cox, "you cannot well comprehend the value in this little bottle. Half the wisdom of the east is concentrated within it. Talk of the elixir!"

A knock at the door prevented the probability of any such discourse; and the appearance of a grave young man in Oriental costume, called Cox up from his seat. The stranger rolled his black eye at Cheek, and seemed to summon to himself new dignity. Approaching Cox, he saluted him, *more Persicorum*, and then slowly turning up the room, squatted cross-legged upon the hearth-rug.

"You don't speak the Persian?" asked Cox doubtingly of Cheek, who, though not quite assured of his ignorance, faulteringly answered—"No."

"That's a pity. A most interesting person, and one of my patients." Cox winked one eye, pointed his thumb over his left shoulder at the sitter, and added, in a tone of confidence—"The sixty-ninth son of the Shah Abbas."

"And all with beards like that?" asked Cheek, admiringly.

"Ha! there's a long history attached to that beard: I assure you, it wasn't always what you now see it. His original want of beard was his misfortune. All his brothers beat him by two spans and

a half; and the Shah, acutely affected by the circumstance, ordered him to be bow-strung. He was brought from Shiraz under the guns of three English frigates. When I return him to the Shah, I can't say what his gratitude may send me."

"Why, it's like a muff," said Isaac, his eye immovably fixed on the chin of the Persian; who at that moment smiled, doubtless at some sweet poetic fancy of the divine Saadi passing through his brain. "Very like a muff," iterated Isaac, confirming himself in the simile; and again the Persian smiled.

"Now, if you will run, Mr. Cheek,—for, as I told you, this is on life and death—if you will immediately run."

Isaac bowed, took the parcel, and quitted the room—but Isaac did not run. We doubt not nature had some dignity in her eye for Cheek, when she sent him earthwards. He was none of your lank strips of humanity, made merely to measure ground—things, whose "nerves, and arteries, and veins" are compressed in their bodies like a skein of thread in paper. No—Isaac was certainly ordained for a mace or a corkscrew; a mayor or a butler. His belly was caski-form, his arms and legs round as bottles, and by the care with which he used them, apparently as fragile. One foot ever seemed to wait a concerted signal from the other

ere it followed it. He walked as though he was of the opinion of the heathen philosopher, that the whole world was like unto an egg. And this majesty of movement Isaac had indirectly cultivated at the table, in the few green seasons of his life when the luxury was open to him. Truth to say, he had been a devourer from the bib: there ran a legend that in his babyhood he had killed three wet-nurses. His face more than hinted the weakness. It was not a face of flesh, but a face of jam. And yet Isaac was recommended as "a man of wax!"

Isaac, impressed with the warning of Cox, that life and death were in the errand, pursued his way in the most philosophical spirit, showing by his features that life and death were equally indifferent to him. At length, however, he arrived at—— square; and having solaced himself for ten minutes at one of the corners with the syren air of a ballad singer, whistled her strain and proceeded onward to seek the wished-for name or number. The door was opened, and a woman eagerly exclaimed—"Thank the Lord! I knew your knock."

"I bring a mixture for"——

"Heaven be praised,—yes!—come along, sir—you must give it to the dear creature yourself!" And Isaac was seized by the wrist, fairly lifted up two pair of stairs, and drawn into a bed-room, by

the woman, who shouted in all but hysterical triumph, "Here—here he is!"

Cheek was bewildered by the scene before him. In the lap of Miss Buckleby, the governess, lay a little girl of about six years old, clothed in holiday white and red shoes, screaming like a cat, and writhing like an eel; whilst an old woman, looking in its blue face, exclaimed with touching hypocrisy, "bless its pretty eyes," and another earnestly solicited the honour of "holding it."

"Ha!" cried an old gentleman with powdered hair, and face as smooth and shining as though made of Dresden china—"Ha! Miss Buckleby, I told you it would be so—those filthy custards"——

"My dear, dear sir," exclaimed Miss Buckleby, in an affecting tone of remonstrance and a look enough to melt any heart not harder than sealing-wax—"My dear, dear sir"——

"Well—I—what I mean to say is, 'tis easy enough to get another wife, but another child"—and here the speaker paused, as if struck by some well-remembered difficulty.

"A slight attack of indigestion, sir," said Miss Buckleby, looking seraphically at Cheek, and pursing her mouth as though she were playing the flageolet—"but as the doctor has not come himself, if you will administer,"——

"Do, sir—pray, lose no time," urged the elderly but unwrinkled gentleman.

Cheek turned his hand into his coat-pocket calmly as any automaton, drew forth the more than "elixir" delivered to him by Mr. Cox, robbed it of its envelope, and a cup being presented to him, filled it from the bottle; and, taking a professional, but unmanly advantage of the sufferer, poured the sovereign anodyne down its little throat. The effect of the medicine may be readily guessed from the women, a second after, crying with one loud voice—"pretty creature!"

The whole group—if we except the great operator, Cheek himself, who stood serene in power—were in a high state of grateful animation. Miss Buckleby smiled, and looked at the elderly gentleman, who gently pressed his hands together, and smiled at Miss Buckleby. At this moment of thanksgiving, a genteel young man was shown into the apartment, and apologizing for the inevitable absence of his principal, produced a phial, uncorked it, and blandly asked for "a spoon." At the words, the mouth of every body present—save the mouth of the little girl—opened as though at the summons of a magician.

"A spoon—what!—another draught—the child hasn't strength to bear it," exclaimed the father.

"Another draught!" echoed the young gentle-

man, knitting his brows, compressing his lips, and swinging round as upon a pivot in front of Cheek, no more affected by the mute challenge than the goat of Esculapius—"Another draught! I beg your pardon, sir—I was not aware that another practitioner—I'm sure, I"—and the speaker, with excited finger and thumb, endeavoured to re-cork the supplanted phial.

"What!" cried the father—"is not this gentleman an assistant of"—he could say no more, so decided was the negative look and gesture of the new visitor. "Then, sir, who are you?" and he spoke to Isaac.

"My name is Cheek," cried Isaac; and had it been Coriolanus he could not have named his name with greater dignity.

"Cheek! and who do you come from?"

"From Mr. Cox."

"Cox!" shrieked Miss Buckleby, and down she fell,

> —"As though that name,
> Shot from the deadly level of a gun,
> Did murder her!"

"And who sent for you?"

"I suppose, Miss Buckleby—for I was told that 'life and death' were on the errand."

"Kind creature!" exclaimed the father "all her anxiety for my dear child—nay, Miss Buckle-

by," and he pressed her hand, and looked in the reviving face of the maiden—"but why send for another doctor—was not Mr. Franklin enough—why should the child take?"——

"Ben-Hily, Ben-Holy, Ben-Haly, Ben-Hallat's Persian Dye?" asked the young practitioner.

"Dye!" screamed the parent; "Dye!" and the doctor pointed out the Orientalism raised in the bottle.

"I perceive—a little mistake," said Cheek, with the nerve of a rhinoceros. "I am the new secretary to Mr. Cox—and all our three footmen being employed, and the butler laid up with the gout, and hearing that Miss Buckleby had sent a life and death command, I volunteered to bring the—the elixir."

"Elixir! and do you know its qualities, sir?"

"No, sir," replied Cheek, evidently proud of his ignorance.

"Do you know the effect of such poison on the human stomach?"

"Poison!" groaned the father—"Poison," shrieked Miss Buckleby; "Poison," sobbed the female servants; "Poison," snorted Cheek, beginning to be moved.

"Oh, sir!" and Miss Buckleby fell at the feet of the old gentleman—"'tis I who am the wretch—'tis I who should suffer—mine, mine, is the crime."

"What crime?" and seeing Miss Buckleby on her knees, the old man was softened, and repeated in gentler tones, "what crime, Louisa?"

"Red hair, sir—red hair!" and she wrung her hands with a thrilling sense of her ignominy.

"Wretch!" he could speak no more, but recoiled horror-struck from the delinquent. Struggling for expression, he at length, in the laconism of extreme woe, appealed to the doctor—"An emetic, sir?"

"A constable," was the reply, and the speaker pointed out Cheek as the proper subject for a police operation.

"But my child—my child—poison—poison!" exclaimed the parent.

"Don't be alarmed, sir," said the doctor, "the elixir is perfectly innocuous. See, sir," and the gentleman applied the Persian dye to his lips.

"Are there no deadly compounds?" asked the old gentleman; "no mortal drugs—no mischievous ingredients?"

"Innocent as milk," was the answer. "So, Mr. Cheek, this time you have escaped a jury. Oh, I assure you," and the speaker again sought to calm the paternal fears—"harmless as water. It is composed of—of—yes," and again and again applying it to his tongue, he enumerated the compounds of the incomparable Persian dye.

Cheek was suffered to depart; and though he

had been the unknowing physician—the unconscious cause of cure, for the dye had proved efficient as antimonian wine—still, as he had not healed on the strength of a diploma, he quitted the house, not only unthanked, but threatened and reviled. Such is the gratitude of man! Nor was he for many a day forgotten in the visions of Miss Buckleby, whose all but successful attack on the widower was foiled by the untoward publication of her red hair. And then the mischance of things! That Cheek should have arrived with the dye at the very moment Mr. Franklin was expected to the little girl!

But Isaac was not all desolate; he had caught some words of consolation; and thus, with steady hand, and a serene face, he again knocked at the door of Mr. Cox. The door was opened.

CHAPTER II.

"ARE you any judge of the fine arts?" asked Cox of Cheek, as the secretary with an improved air of self-confidence, seated himself before his master. In truth, so leisurely had he sunk upon the cushion —so little had he respected the presence of his employer, that Cox felt it necessary to repeat the

question. "Mr. Cheek, are you any judge of the fine arts?"

"Which of 'em?" asked Cheek, and this time never smiled.

"A most exquisite collection,"—proceeded Cox —"every statesman and celebrated pickpocket of more than a century; and then the set of murderers is, I am assured, unrivalled. You have no friends with money, Isaac?" asked Cox, familiarly.

"Why?" said Cheek, in a tone implying a probability of so excellent an advantage. "Why?"

"My dear fellow," and Cox smiled benignantly, "there is now a fortune to be made. You have only to stoop for gold, and pick it up."

"I don't mind stooping," said Isaac, with proper worldly philosophy. "I don't mind stooping," he repeated more determinedly.

"With your talents and your address—your perfect knowledge of mankind—your fine animal spirits"—Cheek swelled like a pouter pigeon— "your invincible energy of character—you—you want but a hundred pounds." (Alas! that such merits should want so little to be perfect!)

"Only a hundred pounds!" said Cheek, as if he spoke of as many grains of sand—"only a hundred pounds!"

"And then you might join me in the venture. I have only heard of it since you quitted me. Yes,"

—and Cox spoke as though he communed with himself—"yes it is wonderfully cheap." At length Cox descended from the clouds, and deigned to enter into particulars. An admirable collection of wax-work had been seized for rent—a kind and active friend had given him notice of the fortunate chance—the whole lot was to be had for something approaching nothing—and if some acute, enterprising person like Cheek would but join him——

"And have they got all the murderers?" asked Isaac.

"All of any reputation," was the answer; "and of course," added Cox, with a fine provident wisdom, "as others come up, we can add them to the stock."

"Well then, Mr. Cox, I think the sooner you and I are added to them the better."

"Mr. Cheek!" and Cox pushed his chair back, as though it went on a railway. "Mr. Cheek!"

In few words Isaac related the accident which had applied the dye, not to the fiery tresses of Miss Buckleby, but to the interesting intestines of her infant charge; maliciously adding, that the child was not expected to last out the night.

"Why, Mr. Cheek, can such stupidity?—give hair dye to a child?—the Persian dye to"——

"How did I know what it was? You talked of your patients—said the mixture was on 'life and

death'—I was dragged into the room—the child lay screaming—what *could* I do?"

"But did it swallow a tun, it couldn't kill it," vociferated Cox.

"That's what I said," cried Cheek. "But if the child goes off, who is to satisfy a coroner's jury? To be sure, I could in my defence publish the recipe."

"You never would be such a scoundrel?"

"Life is sweet, Mr. Cox," said Isaac, and he smacked his lips, and his eyes twinkled mischief.

"The recipe! publish the recipe—make known the compounds of the inimitable dye!" and Cox spoke and looked as though he touched upon a crime not registered in the calendar of mortal guilt. —"But"—and the features of Cox were scarlet with satisfaction as he triumphantly crowed forth—"before you publish the recipe, you must know it."

Isaac spoke not, but set at Cox like a pointer; the jaw of the proprietor of the Persian dye fell as he gazed on the terribly eloquent eye of Cheek, who, with no more passion in his voice than is struck out by marrow bone and cleaver, dissonantly enumerated all the compounds uttered by the doctor. The face of Cox changed to all colours like the face of a mandril—and his hair rose upon his head like the hair of a spitting cat.

Imagine the sweating drudge of half a century,

the living mummy of a laboratory, at length glorified by the long-sought secret; see him towering among his crucibles, and his retorts, challenging a place with the gods, to whom his "so potent art" has raised him; mark him swelling with the consciousness of immortal strength, the sole repository of superhuman wisdom—and then imagine a subtle spy creeping from a corner, a curious dwarf who watched the last process, hath plucked out the heart of the mystery, and lying *perdu* at the golden moment, hath, at a single point of time, possessed himself of the slow-coming glory of an age: so looked the alchymist Cox—so looked the prying Cheek!

"And is—is the child so very bad?" at length asked Cox, trying to compose his face into a corpse-like serenity.

"I should think anybody would give a hundred pounds for my discovery," said Cheek.

"While there's life there's hope," cried the self-comforting Cox.

"Let the worst come, by selling the recipe I shall be able to fee counsel," observed Cheek.

"'Twould be a stain for ever on the Persian dye," groaned Cox. "Don't you think, Mr. Cheek, that—if it would not be very inconvenient—a little journey out of town—say to Liverpool—packets

start every week to America—and in case of the worst"——

"What! quit my country? Leave England?" and all the patriot rushed into the countenance of Cheek. "How could I live, sir? No; I'll wait and face a jury, even if I should be hanged."

Cox looked up, and sudden hope seemed lighted in his features. The current of his thoughts appeared in an instant changed, and clasping his right knee with his hands, and gazing with a look of patronage on Cheek, he observed, "Well, after all, perhaps it would be best."

"That I should be hanged?"

"Now I think again, 'twould be the making of the dye. Consider the advertisement."

"Even transportation might give it a lift," urged Cheek, satirically.

"A trifle like a public whipping could do it no harm," said Cox; and Cheek moved uneasily in his chair. "But, really, Mr. Cheek, if you think the child cannot recover, I must immediately prepare for the increasing demand."

"You may save yourself that trouble," replied Cheek, sullenly, "the child is well as I am; but for the recipe"——

"I see it, Cheek, you are the very man I need; Robinson anticipated all my wants when he sent

you. Let us understand each other. As I asked before, have you any taste for the fine arts?"

"I like four meals a day," replied Cheek, "and have a taste for anything that will get 'em."

"Solomon's wisdom goes to nothing better," said the sensual Cox. "Well, about this collection that accident makes a bargain." Cox was not so tedious as to state that he was the landlord of the shed where the collection was *not* exhibited. "You shall be nominally the sole proprietor."

"Nominally?" grunted Cheek.

"You have some conscience, I hope, Mr. Cheek?" asked Cox, but Isaac replied not. "What I mean is, that the exhibition shall be under your name, and that the profits be equally divided between us, the half of the purchase-money being first deducted from your share." Cheek sat pondering silently; and his face became purple with thought. "Consider the advantage of the offer; and again, think of the standing it will give you in society. The sole proprietor of the original wax-work! You shall have possession of all the figures, with, as they say in Parliamentary Committees, 'power to add to their number.' Well, Mr. Cheek?" and Cox waited for the *ultimatum*.

"There's my hand," said Cheek, presenting that piece of anatomy as though it were costly as the palm of Midas. "There's my hand."

"And between men of honour quite enough," cried Cox.

"I don't care much for parchment," observed Cheek; "and yet it's a necessary evil."

"True, but I can see we want no deed—we shall agree like brothers."

"And with brothers, says the Italian," and Cheek spoke with the air of a schoolmaster—"two witnesses and a notary."

"Proverbs, Mr. Cheek, proverbs are the second-hand wisdom of fools and knaves."

"Mr. Cox!" and Cheek rose like a bear on its hind legs, to enquire the particular class to which he might belong.

Fortunately for their infant contract, a knock at the door called off the attention of the parties. The Persian gentleman with the beard, not perceiving the whereabout of Cheek, said in good Petticoat-lane English.

"Mister Cox, here's Michael Hangelo in the passage."

"Show him in," said Cox. But it is only due to Michael Angelo that he should enter with a new chapter.

CHAPTER III.

CHEEK, who had somewhere heard the name, but knew not the precise species of creature to which it was attached, cast his eyes curiously towards the door for Michael Angelo. He saw nobody, but was startled by a sound proceeding, as at first he thought, from under the carpet. He looked down, and saw upon the floor something nearly three feet high; a figure that seemed as if originally formed of full dimensions, but crushed within a mould to its present dwarf deformity. There was that flesh and bone about him, that if "long drawn out," would have lengthened into a symmetrical life-guardsman. In a word, he was a man shut in like an opera-glass. He was habited in a faded grass-green coat, with buttons up to the shoulders—buttons robbed of their gold in the struggle through life; a blue velvet waistcoat, its glory somewhat obscured; drab breeches, and speckled worsted stockings; in one hand he held a copper-mounted cane—with the other, he waved a hat, not unlike a decapitated sugar-loaf, bowing as though he bent before the assembled human race.

"Well, sir, I hope we have arranged this

matter, so as to spare your professional feelings." Thus spoke Cox; and Michael Angelo, with the intense gratitude of a man of genius, pressed his hat to his bosom, slid his legs backwards and forwards, and bowed. "I should have been sorry to see the figures put up to public auction."

"Sir!" exclaimed Michael Angelo, and his small voice rang as though it came through a glass tube—"'twould have been an everlasting blot upon the age. What! Newton going by the hammer! Ravaillac knocked down! Jack Shepherd bid for! To have had that glorious constellation of art scattered to the four winds of heaven! Napoleon, perhaps, bought by the Court of Petersburgh—Voltaire gone to the Pope—Joan of Arc possessed by the grand Turk, and, though I say it, all my beautiful murderers purchased by the managers of Drury Lane and Covent Garden!" The tears came into the eyes of the speaker at the bare thought of such desecration.

"This gentleman," and Cox introduced Cheek, who, standing up, and placing his hat before the patch, received the homage of Michael—"this gentleman, with a rare feeling towards the arts, has consented to purchase the whole collection."

"In the name of every artist in Europe—in the name of the mighty dead, sir, permit me, a humble labourer in the immortal fields of grace and beauty,

to thank you for a devotion of which, I am sorry to say, the present time affords so few examples. No, sir; we are a money-scraping generation, and, as I often say to Josephine, my wife, sir, are deaf and blind to the emanations of the soft and lovely. Mr. Cheek, what now, flattery apart," and Michael took out a horn snuff-box, and tapping the lid, continued his question—"what now do you really think of my twins?"

"I have not the pleasure, sir, of knowing any of your family," replied Cheek.

"Ha! ha! I should have told you," said Cox, "that this gentleman, Mr. Michael Angelo Pops, is the artist to the collection."

Cheek bowed, and Pops, full of himself, continued—"I am not vain, Mr. Cheek; no, I trust I am as free from that vice as any R. A. of the lot; by the way, sir, it's sometimes lucky to be a stone-mason, isn't it?—but can the whole Academy match my twins? And yet they rob me—rob me, every year."

"Rob you!" cried Cheek, "and have you no redress?"

"No, sir, no; they change the material; I work in wax—and they commit the felony in stone. Did you ever see *my* Pitt? Well, sir, I don't like to mention names; but if I hav'n't been shamefully copied! however, I am used to these things.—That

makes the third prime minister stolen from me. Well, it can't be helped; but if I'd stuck to bronze, and never fallen upon wax,"—and Pops took half a handful of rappee to drive away reflection.—Still he returned to his injuries, exclaiming, with the look of a Diogenes—"Ha, sir! genius is nothing—wisdom is nothing—worth is nothing in this world, it's the material makes the man! A Phidias in wax isn't worth a—but, no, I won't mention names—in free-stone. Ha! it's a great curse, Mr. Cheek, to be born with a sense of the beautiful; I, who might have made a fortune as a tallow-chandler, may starve upon wax."

"Well, Mr. Pops, let us hope for better justice, as the world grows wiser under the direction of Mr. Cheek," said the comforting Cox.

"I can see, sir, a man who knows life. Now, the late proprietor, a very worthy person, was too much for abstract principles to give fair play to the show."

"What do you mean by abstract principles?" asked Cheek, with the humility of a pupil.

"Why, sir, he was for giving a crowd of folks out of Greek history, and didn't pay sufficient attention to our Newgate Calendar. He'd spare no money to get up a Cæsar, toga and all, and yet grudge the expense of a journey to Kingston to get the face of the first house-breaker of his day—

that's what I call abstract principles, sir. The present wax-seeing people, sir, require excitement; their bowels are only to be come at through blood. Bless your heart, sir, my figure of Mrs. Brownrigg brings showers of shillings (to be sure she wears her original nightcap), while the Venus de Medicis takes never a farthing. No, sir, no; no man who shows wax-work should indulge in abstract principles."

"There's nothing stirring of late, is there, Mr. Pops? No new child with two heads—no piebald girl?" asked Cox.

"No, sir, no; nature has been plaguy dull and monotonous of late; there was a talk of a birth in high life of a little boy with horns like an elk; but I'm afraid, sir, 'tisn't true. When will Mr. Cheek take possession?"

"Immediately," replied Cox.—"Immediately," responded Cheek.

"I need not say, Mr. Pops, that we shall—I mean, that Mr. Cheek will be—most happy to retain your eminent services as artist to the exhibition," observed Cox; and Michael Angelo made a bow, which reduced his height to something above that of a buttock of beef.

"Shall I have the honour of accompanying Mr. Cheek? I have only to call in Parker's Lane to order supper of Josephine—poor thing, she's not

very well—by the way, Aaron," and the artist turned round upon the Persian with the beard—on the sixty-ninth son of the Shah Abbas, who happened to unceremoniously open the door;—"by the way, Aaron, that bit of rhubarb I bought of you on Thursday in Shoreditch, turned out none of the best."

"Rhubarb!" said Cheek, looking knowingly at Cox, who raised his shoulders, sighed, smiled, and said, "Ha! Mr. Cheek, the exile is sometimes reduced to melancholy shifts." Leaving Cheek to ponder on this sorrowful truth, Cox turned up the room, and Michael Angelo proceeded to escort the new proprietor to Parker's Lane.

"You'll not take a coach?" asked Pops, promising himself that luxury. Cheek thrusting his two hands into his pockets, replied with peculiar decision, "No!"

It was about five o'clock on a sultry afternoon in July, when Cheek arrived at the mansion of Pops, in Parker's Lane. There were outward signs of the epicurean habits of the dwellers within. The door-way, strewn with pea-shells, tempted a frail sow from her proper path, the road, to dispute possession of the prize with about twenty children, who swarmed about the step, thick as bees at the mouth of a hive. Pops, who fairly disappeared among the crowd of bantlings, led the way, direct-

ing Cheek by his voice. "Never mind Betsy—she's gentle as a rabbit," said Pops, as Cheek deferentially drew back from the mountain of living pork stopping the door. Arrived in the passage, he was about to mount the stairs, when a brindled bull-bitch, whose appearance gave the naturalist a hope that the breed was not likely to be extinct, lying at the bottom, raised her head as Cheek raised his foot, rattled a growl, exhibited two rows of teeth in splendid preservation, and her eye, kindling like a live coal, threatened sudden mischief. "Never mind her," said Pops, "she won't bite,"—but Cheek, with a lack of faith in feminine forbearance, refused to advance. Pops leapt from the stair, and valiantly holding the animal by her two ears, enabled the pusillanimous Cheek to ascend. The weather was extremely hot, and as Cheek mounted from story to story, the staircase provokingly reminded him of a corkscrew, and that, by an association of ideas, suggested ale. "Another, if you please," said Pops bashfully, as Cheek paused at the fourth floor: "only another," cried Pops, in a tone of encouragement. Cheek turned to renew the labour, when he was fixed upon the first stair by the voice, as he considered, of a man with a confirmed cold, exclaiming—

"Go, my best love; unbend you at the banquet;
Indulge in joy and laugh your cares away;

While in the bowers of great Semiramis
I dress your bed with all the sweets of nature,
And cover it as the altar of our loves;
Where I will lay me down and softly mourn,
But never close my eyes till you return."

Cheek cast an enquiring look upon Pops, and was about to speak, when another voice, with a new emphasis, but with a trifling impediment in its delivery, repeated—

" Wh-e-re I w-will l-l-ay m-e down and so-oftly mo-ourn,
B-b-ut ne-ver clo-o-se my e-eyes ti-ill you re-turn."

Again Cheek looked, when Pops observed with a smile—" One of Josephine's pupils—Miss Boss—a charming girl,"—and jumping at the latch of the door, made into the room, followed by Cheek, who, unseen, was fortunate enough to hear a repetition of the two lines, under the correcting auspices of Mrs. Pops. Both ladies, their backs turned to him, and the pupil following the action of the preceptress, who, with the edge of her right hand, continued to cut a perpendicular line, and faithfully in the same place, exclaimed syllable for syllable—

MRS. POPS.

" Wh-e-re I w-will l-l-ay m-e down, and so-oftly mo-ourn."

MISS BOSS.

" Where I will lay me down, and softly mourn."

MRS. POPS.

" B-b-ut ne-ver clo-o-se my e-eyes ti-ill you re-turn."

MISS BOSS.

" But never close my eyes till you return!"

At the word "return," Mrs. Pops, with kerchief in right hand, made the "cut six," and with the vigour of a dragoon, at the same instant swinging round to "exit" with a dignity that caused three teacups on the mantle piece to tremble, and brought down sundry bits of broken ceiling. In this peculiar action—and it was the distinguishing grace of all the pupils of Mrs. Pops—she was rigidly followed by Miss Boss, who, unhappily too near Mr. Cheek, raised her hand, grasping her kerchief on the word "return," and twisting to the door, brought her fist with fine energy upon the nose of the unseen guest. Had Cribb played tragedy, the hit could not have been more effectual! Cheek fell against the door, with the weight of a stunned bull—Miss Boss clasped her hands, and made so low a curtsy, that she nearly sat upon the floor—Mrs. Pops shrieked, and woke a child in the cradle, who answered the maternal note, and two boys, who at first shouted a laugh, added to the cry of pain and terror, their ears having been boxed by the mother for their unseemly merriment! To vary the tumult, a bantam hen, sitting in a triangular deal spittoon in the corner, quitted her eggs, and flying on the back of a chair, essayed her voice; the cry was taken up by her late companions in the street, and Parker's Lane rang like the poultry yard of the Ark.

"My S-tars, P-pops!" were the first words, and they were spoken by Josephine. Miss Boss, the delinquent, said nothing; but still stood with clasped hands surveying the blood-dropping nose of Cheek. She had not even sufficient presence of mind to offer him her handkerchief, but suffered it to be twitched from her by her preceptress, who liberally presented it for the use of the sufferer. Cheek took it in silence, and removed from the door: Miss Boss immediately spied her opportunity, and slipping behind her victim, lifted the latch, and having flourished her hands about in mute horror to Mrs. Pops, ran down the stairs like any sylph, but was immediately followed by one of the boys, despatched by the instructress.

"I am so sorry," said the host, as he looked up to Cheek swollen like a bladder.

"It won't be very black," said Josephine, as she descried the colour gathering about Cheek's right eye.

"The best remedy in the world," exclaimed Pops, and jumping on a chair he withdrew a piece of raw beef from the cage of a jay suspended from a nail; and insisted upon its immediate application to the bruise.

"I hope you're better, sir?" said Mrs. Pops, her stutter becoming aggravated with her sympathy.

"What! is she gone?" cried Pops, looking

wrathfully round like a balked despot for Miss Boss.

"She had an appointment, my dear—she had to meet"—and Josephine bowed and whispered—"she had to meet *them* in the Park, at the Theological Gardens."

"She will be so sorry," said Pops, comfortingly to Isaac.

"A charming girl," cried Josephine—"she is about to appear in *Statira*, I was giving her the last lesson. I'm sure she'll be happy to present the gentleman with a ticket. Do you know, Pops, the people at the 'Garden' won't let her play unless she takes three pounds worth of tickets, and, poor thing! she has no connexion for pit or boxes. But as I said, I'm sure, if this gentleman will accept,"——

"Josephine, my love," cried Pops, with the air of a man who has too long deferred a sacred duty, "Josephine, my love, Mr. Cheek,—the gentleman who has purchased 'the property.'"

Mrs. Pops made a low curtsy to the new proprietor, and still nursing her infant—for, like *Lady Macbeth*, Mrs. Pops at the time knew what it was "to give suck,"—she proceeded to congratulate, amidst the cries of her baby, played upon like a bagpipe by the right arm of the pacifying mother.

"I shall be home at nine to supper," said Pops, "let it be whatever you please." Josephine gave

an anxious look, and timidly asked—"Lamb chops and *grass*, Michael?"

"Whatever you please," was the liberal answer; and Pops was making for the door, when his wife called him back with sudden energy. He returned to his helpmate, who commenced an admirable piece of pantomime, unfortunately lost upon the dull perceptions of Cheek. Had he been open to passionately eloquent appeals of action, he would have understood Mrs. Pops to say—"Pops, have you no money?—you perceive that Miss Boss is gone off; and although this is the third lesson she owes us, although this is the third time I have gone through *Statira* with her, she has not"——

In the midst of the motions, the little boy despatched after Miss Boss returned; sidling close to his mother, he gave her eighteen pence, and whispered, in a tone audible to Cheek,—"Now she says she only owes you for two." Mrs. Pops took the money with the dignity of a queen; and, looking graciously down upon Pops, said—"Very well, love—at nine."

"A treasure of a woman that, sir," said Pops as he descended the staircase—"ha! sir, such a brain; a great creature, sir—a great creature."

Cheek who was as literal as a note-of-hand, merely replied, "Very stout, indeed."

"True, sir—true;" and Michael heaved a sigh.

"Ha! sir—but for her figure she'd bring me forty pounds a-week."

"That's a pity," said Cheek. "How so?"

"It can't be disguised, sir; for present taste Mrs. Pops"—(if their be faith in weights and balance she was fifteen stone)—"Mrs. Pops is a *little* too heavy for her line."

"The tight rope or slack-wire?" asked the dull and innocent Cheek.

"Mr. Cheek, I perceive, sir, that you are not theatrical?" said Pops, sullenly.

"No, sir, I am not," replied Cheek, as though defending himself from an infamous insinuation.

"Is Mrs. Pops?"

"Some day, sir," said Pops with an encouraging manner, "some day, sir, I'll show you the spice-box and lemon-squeezers presented to her by the turners of Tunbridge Wells. Ha! sir, her *Juliet* was a thing to keep a man awake of nights. They talk of the *Juliets* and the *Belvideras* of the present time! put 'em altogether they wouldn't make half of Josephine." Cheek, at this, looked like a proselyte. "No, sir, there is so much nature about her!" Cheek looked more and more convinced. "And then, sir, she is so devoted to her art. She has such an intense love for the profession, that though banished from the stage herself—and, by-

the-by, I have seen women of as grand a scale, but without her soul, sir—she has won me to consent to her giving lessons."

"To furnish ready-made actresses?" observed Cheek, with rare acuteness.

"To bring 'em out, sir,—to teach them nature—to show them the established way of developing the passions: in fact, to put young ladies up to all sorts of stage business. You should hear her give a lesson in elocution,—in"—(for Cheek looked puzzled)—"in the proper mode of delivering prose and verse."

"But," said Cheek, her stutter still beating in his ears, "but hasn't she an impediment that"——

"None, sir—that has ever been observed. Her pupils have all done wonders. Some Sunday, Mr. Cheek, I'll walk with you in the Park and point out their carriages to you."

"Bless me! she must find it very profitable," remarked Cheek, with an eye to business.

"She might, sir, if she was not so particular; but the fact is, if Josephine has any fault, it is that of excessive nicety. 'Talent, my love,' she always says to her young ladies, 'talent, my love, may do a great deal upon the stage,—but, with London managers, there is nothing—nothing like private character.' Now, sir, you saw Miss Boss?"

Cheek's lips became rigid as a horse-shoe at the question, and passing his knuckles tenderly across his nose, he replied—"Saw her, and felt her."

Pops, magnanimously waiving the injuries of his neighbour, continued, with no allusion to Isaac's nose—"An excellent person, sir; a good, virtuous, discreet girl; and, as my wife informs me, an admirable breeches figure."

"Breeches?" exclaimed Cheek; but further enquiry on his part was prevented by Michael Angelo, who suddenly stopt in front of a house, saying—"This is the place, sir."

CHAPTER IV.

THE artist, with a dignified waving of the hand, laconically but proudly observed—"Here we are, sir!"

A great moral lesson is taught by wax-work. Pops evidently spoke as if assured of such influence. Certain we are, there is no show so worthy the twelve-pence of a philosopher. Orators and pick-pockets—philanthropists and cut-throats—swindlers and state arithmeticians here shoulder one another, and almost seem to plead a common right to their respective callings. Here is a king eter-

nally opening Parliament—there a minister looking perpetually wise—there a celebrated orator, always about to rival Demosthenes, but never doing so—there a council of potentates and warriors, met to discuss peace, with no likelihood of concluding the deliberation—and patriots always about to sacrifice themselves for the good of their country, and not moving a finger for that purpose. A show of wax-work is a fine exhibition of human *intentions*. And yet, however cunningly fashioned, the figures appear to be the handiwork of death, anticipating or commemorating the image set up.

"And what figure is that? Bless me it's alive!" asked and exclaimed Cheek, as a young creature of about sixteen turned full upon him.

"Eleanor, my dear, you may go home; there'll be nothing more to-night," said Pops to the girl, taking no note of the words of Isaac. The girl—a meek, intelligent, young thing—smiled sweetly upon the dwarf, bent to Cheek, tied her bonnet-strings, and glided silently as a shadow away.

"Your daughter?" asked Cheek.

"Dear, no! Poor thing—poor thing! You saw where she was standing? She knows nothing of the matter, and never shall!"

"What matter?"

"Why, sir, it's a long story; and it isn't as pleasing as a fairy tale. Well, sir, you see that figure?"

"That in the frieze jacket and leather-cap?" said Cheek.

"The same. Well, sir, you must know that poor Eleanor—she's been, I may say, as good as my own child these eleven years"——

"What, does she live with your family?"

"She's quiet and contented, and wants little—gives no trouble—takes up no room;—and then so trustworthy—she takes the money here, sir, and is true, sir—true as arithmetic. Josephine and she quarrel a little sometimes—that is, Josephine quarrels, for Eleanor says nothing."

"But who is she—where did she come from?" asked Cheek, with, for him, extraordinary interest.

"Why, sir, if you'll promise to be secret, I'll tell you. Eleanor is"—

"Good evening, Mr. Pops," said a languid voice, issuing from a dark pale gentleman, until the previous moment absorbed in the contemplation of one of the figures. "Good evening, Mr. Pops," and the speaker relapsed into profound meditation.

"Do you know who that is?" asked Pops of Isaac in a whisper, standing upon his toes to waft the query softly upwards. Cheek looked towards the visitor, then down upon Pops, and shook his head. "A great man—comes here very often—indeed, he's on our free-list."

"An editor, perhaps?" guessed Cheek.

"Not in the least," replied Pops. "I'll introduce you to him—I will, upon my life," asseverated the artist, big with the honour he was about to bestow. Michael softly approached the great man, followed by Cheek. "Hem!—Hem! an extraordinary person, that?" said Pops, diffidently opening the conversation, and pointing to the figure of Mrs. Brownrigg (in her original nightcap), the figure that had stolen the heart, and eyes, and thoughts of the gentleman on the free-list; who made no reply. Pops ventured to speculate that it was impossible to make anything of her.

"A most difficult subject to handle. But yet, I think, with proper treatment," said the visitor, "I think"——

"Well, for my part, I should think such a person past doing any thing for," said Cheek, with virtuous disgust of the coal-hole murderess.

"There would be a difficulty,—but, yes, she might be managed."

"Impossible!" exclaimed Cheek, with energetic horror.

"Perhaps, sir, you are not aware of my treatment of such characters?" asked the gentleman with ill-disguised pride. "Perhaps—I say perhaps—you have not heard how I managed with"—and here the speaker ran over a list of the most celebrated highwaymen, sheep-stealers, and house-breakers—

"you are not aware, perhaps, what I have made of them?" and the gentleman again cast his eyes upon Mrs. Brownrigg, and again was silent.

"Now do you know who he is?" asked Pops in a half-breath, his eyes all in a glitter.

"I perceive," replied the sagacious Cheek. "I perceive—keeper of the Penitentiary."

"Lord love you, no! Why, it's the great author—the great writer of plays, Mr. Victor Nogo!" exclaimed Michael Angelo, with kindred admiration of a brother artist.

"Humph!"—and Mr. Nogo, rapt by the subject, communed with his spirit, almost wholly unconscious of the presence of his hearers—"Yes, it may—it shall be done! I see the capability of great effects. Ha! '*an illuminated view of the Coal-hole, with the moon rising on the bodies of the victims!*' And then—ha!—yes—'*An awful storm—the coals suddenly ignited by a flash of lightning—the Coal-hole entered by firemen, and providential discovery of the bodies!*' There's three electrical effects; let me see—'*Miraculous recovery of one of the apprentices, who, at the critical moment, produces the whip in court, and thus supplies the only required link of evidence!*' Capital! and then—I have it—'*Procession to Tyburn, with the real Jack Ketch, engaged, at a great expense, for the run of the drama; and the last dying*

speech of Mrs. Brownrigg, to orchestral accompaniments; the cart to be drawn from under her feet amidst a—A BRILLIANT DISPLAY OF FIREWORKS!' Why, I see it—the thing is done;" and the poet made in his note-book hasty memoranda of the aspirations of his muse. "And now for the title"—and Nogo vigorously scratched his head, still no title came; he scratched again—again—and then he plucked the brilliant thought away. "I have it!"—and he wrote it down, and the letters beamed to the fancy of the domestic bard like a row of diamonds—"I have it—'THE BLOOD STAINED COAL-SACK! OR, FORTY MURDERS IN FIVE MINUTES!'"—And Mr. Nogo clasped the book, and thrust it into his pocket, with the triumphant air of a magician who had caught and bound to his service some under-working sprite. In very truth, the mysterious note-book was hardly of less power than the potent tome of the Italian necromancer—

> "Trassene un libro, e mostro *grande effetto;*
> Che legger non fini la prima faccia,
> Che uscir fa un spirto in forma di valletto
> E gli comanda quanto vuol che faccia!"

Yea, Nogo's common-place book was a book of "great effects." Genii of the mountain, the flood, and the mine—devils with tails and horns of various lengths—dwarfs, giants, griffins, hippopotami—

variegated vultures and huge sky-blue spiders—all were in its leaves, ready at the motion of the master to produce "a great effect!"

"What, sir?—I see you have it!" said Pops, having watched the divine impulse of the poet, the return of the book to his pocket, and the gleam of satisfaction that irradiated his countenance—"Yes, I'm sure you have it; we may shortly expect something—eh, sir?" and Michael Angelo smiled, anticipating the glory.

"Why, yes; I may say it's done. Though, in this piece, I shall not sacrifice myself to language: I shall keep my eye upon effect. Yes, I flatter myself, I know what the public likes. There are dramatists, to be sure"—and Nogo turned to Cheek—"who do prettily enough with words; but then none of them have any effects."

"I have always heard it was a poor business," said Cheek, understanding effects in the spirit of a broker.

"Now, I am not vain; but I do think I know what an audience is made of—yes, I may say, I can successfully reduce a drama to the meanest understanding. By the way, Mr. Pops, you never saw the gilt inkstand gratefully presented to me by Mr. Blaze, of the New Cut, the celebrated maker of blue lights and red fire. Now, if such things arn't triumphs of the drama, I should like to know what are?"

"There's no mistake in silver-gilt," said the tangible Cheek.

"If that isn't genius, I know nothing about it," magisterially concluded Pops. "Speaking of genius, Mr. Nogo, I am afraid you never saw any of Josephine's pupils. Ha! you should hear some of them read."

"I didn't know she keept a school," said the author.

"Not exactly a school; though many of the nobility have pressed her to open an academy for the art, and teach comedy and tragedy, at so much by the quarter—opera, pantomime, and dancing to be paid for as extras. And she ought to do it—she ought; but the truth is—and I am sorry to be compelled to own it—the truth is, Josephine is too modest. Ha! sir, diffident worth may live on dead flies in a garret; whilst confident pretence—but I say nothing. By the way, have you heard that Miss Sappho, since she has retired from the stage, teaches elocution and passion in all their branches? Absolutely has half-a-guinea a lesson for teaching young ladies how to repeat their part of the marriage service with the proper hysterics. Half-a-guinea a-lesson! Ha, sir! you should have heard Mrs. Pops repeat the marriage service."

"Pray, did *you* ever hear her?" asked Cheek of Pops; who stared, fluttered, and, after some

difficulty, laughed at the strange blunder of the querist.

"But, as I said, sir—diffident worth"—Pops, however, spoke to the dreaming; for Mr. Nogo stood in a trance. Pops repeated the words—"But, as I said, sir—diffident worth"——

"I beg your pardon"—and Nogo started into speech—"I beg your pardon; but it will make the bill stronger, and will add materially to the interest of the piece—could you lend us the authentic night-cap?"

"I have no doubt, sir, that—that"——

"Thank you," quickly replied the author, taking the benefit of Michael's doubt, and hastily quitting the premises.

"A great man, sir—a very great man—knows the public taste, sir—and helps to make what he knows," said the eulogistic Pops to Cheek, who had turned round, and with fixed eyes stared on the figure in the frieze jacket and leather cap.

"And now, about that girl?" said Cheek——

"Well, sir; you see, Eleanor—bless me! why, what's the matter?"—and Pops, again interrupted in his projected narrative, turned to the son of the Shah-Abbas—to the Persian rhubarb-dealer—who hastily entered the place; and, in few words, informed the new proprietor and artist that Mr. Cox required their instant attendance at his house on business.

"What can it be?" asked Pops.

"I thinks—I thinks"—and Aaron rubbed his hands with the glee of an ogre—"I thinks it's a new murder."

"A new murder!" ejaculated Cheek, with a look of timidity.

"And there's pork chops for supper," added the Persian.

"Let us go directly," said Cheek, "it may be very important."

"I shouldn't wonder if he wants us to travel for a new subject," said Pops.

"You've hit it," said the foreigner, with a good knowledge of our idiom.

"Another murder!" exclaimed Pops.

"And pork chops for supper!" added Cheek; and with these words they quitted the show-room, and betook themselves to the house of Mr. Cox, who, in truth, had projected a provincial pilgrimage of business for the artist and the proprietor.

But a new chapter must be allotted to the commencement of the eventful wanderings of the man —or rather of the men of wax.

CHAPTER V.

THE journey of Cheek and Pops from London to —— was, we are distressed to say, unrelieved by any accident. Not a single highwayman, not even a broken axletree mitigated the monotony of the way; and thus, two and twenty hours after their departure from the metropolis, they were seated in the little parlour of the Silver Stag, eating their breakfast like common people. Cheek was not a professed wit; but now and then he threw a pleasantry away, "like dewdrops from a lion's mane." In the present instance Isaac, jocund of heart, and heavy of abdomen, turned up a face of light, and exclaimed, from the very bottom of his belly, "Why, Pops, this is the land of milk and butter!" The reader of severe taste may see but little in the sentence; we can nevertheless assure him, that for Cheek there was a great deal in it. Pops grunted an affirmative through a mouthful, and again addressed himself to a ham, which he seemed rather to perch upon—so diminutive did he look—than sit to.

It is one of the fatal evidences of the infirmity of our nature that appetite decreases with eating. However, let us not linger on the fallacy of all

human hopes—be it sufficient to us to say that Cheek, finishing his breakfast, felt a saddening truth endured by highest genius—he felt how far execution lagged behind conception. The untouched twelfth egg—the last slice of twenty strata of bread and butter—proved to him that he was mortal!

"And now, now to business," cried the artist, wiping his mouth, and pulling down his cuffs. "Our first care must be to get into the gaol. Why, what's the matter?" proceeded Pops, seeing Isaac suddenly wince, as though, like Puck, he was seated on a thistle. "For my part, I've been I may say"—and Michael spoke with a new air of superiority—"Yes, I may say I have done business in almost every gaol in the country."

"They are ugly places," replied Cheek gloomily.

"I have passed many pleasant days in 'em," averred Pops. "The world, Mr. Cheek, the world has no idea of life in a condemned cell. I've met with civilities there that would make—ay, noblemen blush. And then for morals—and for what one may call the decencies of society—oh! you have no idea how sentence of death brings out the real politeness of a man. There was Jack Fobem—as great a bully as ever blustered—well, two days before he was hanged, you might have taken him for a lord."

"Shall you be long over the present job?" asked Isaac.

"No—no—trust to me; when I once get into the prison, I have all my tools with me, and I'll bring my man away at a single sitting."

At this moment, the landlady of the Silver Stag made her appearance. Casting a rapid glance now on Isaac, and now on Pops, she proceeded to clear the table. In the middle of her task, she paused—and observed, in the cold, accusing tone of a Siddons—"Where's the other spoon?" at the same time displaying three in her hand. "I say—where's the other spoon?"

"My good woman,"—cried Pops, the landlady colouring to the eyes at the epithet—"My good woman"—

"Oh!" exclaimed the landlady, discovering the lost property under the turned edge of the tea-board. "I'll bring your bill directly," she added, anticipating the order for that certain evil.

"What do they take us for?" asked Pops in amaze, vainly awaiting an interpretation on the part of Cheek. "What can they take us for?" And still Isaac, in his modesty, could not determine. The landlady, with almost incredible speed, returned with the bill. Pops twitched it from between her fingers, and laid the document upon the table, as though it was to be considered that day

three months; and then putting his forefinger to his brow, and his thumb to his cheek-bone, asked—his honour sweating blood at every pore—"Pray, madam, do you lose many spoons in this house?"

"No, sir, never; for before some people leave the room, I always take care to count 'em."

Pops trembled from head to heel, and was fairly stricken dumb by the new insult. But for Cheek—true philosopher as he was—he was as proof to such attacks as an armadillo. Whilst Pops was convulsed, strangled for a reply, Cheek maintained magnanimous silence; and whilst the artist could have transfixed the landlady with his just indignation, Isaac, with his forefinger on the table, traced a circle of water round a perplexed gray-coated gnat. *Aquila non captat muscas*, saith the motto—but the motto was not made for Cheek.

"I say, madam—I say, do you know who we are?" roared Pops, whilst Cheek raised a meek look of remonstrance towards the querist. "Perhaps, you are not aware that I am an artist of"——

"I thought so," exclaimed the woman, as though her worst doubts were realized; and she spun herself out of the room.

"They know nothing of us here," observed Cheek, with the indifference of a stoic. "Consider, we are more than a hundred miles from London."

"But fame—fame travels, Mr. Cheek," returned Pops.

"Not always by the stage," answered Isaac, careless of the truth he uttered; for Isaac was often as unconscious of the pearl he let fall, as the oyster that breeds one. "Not by the stage!" Alas, how many a genius—how many an eighth wise man, having booked his place, finds even at the end o twenty leagues that his fame hath not come passenger! How many a great mind hath been levelled by mile-stones! How many a prophet in his own town, removed to the next, looseth his mantle!

"Not to be known here! Why, my name is on my box!" cried Michael Angelo.

"Perhaps the people can't read," replied Cheek, and Pops seemed somewhat comforted by the probable ignorance. "True, true," he assented, with the small voice of peace; and then he suddenly knocked his clenched fist on the table, and knitting his brows, and his face turning to an imperial purple, Michael shrieked—"But the spoon, Isaac! the spoon!"

"That was odd," said Cheek, beginning to whistle.

"Odd! I call it infamous," vociferated Pops.

"But you must own the ham was capital," ob-

served Isaac, benevolently wishing to give praise where praise was due.

"To be suspected of a robbery! *Me!*" and Michael cast his eyes towards the sky, as though he expected to see it open.

"And the bread-and-butter delicious," continued the eulogistic Cheek. Pops said nothing, but his face suddenly became wrinkled like a brook; he gasped with indignation.

Foolish, foolish Michael Angelo Pops! How often do we see a little man with a great soul fuming, pelting, wearing out his littleness with his greatness—teasing himself and his neighbours about his reputation; when a wise, quiet, happy fellow, fattens in tranquillity, thinking only of his "bread-and-butter!"

"If, indeed," and Pops felt strong in what boxers call new wind—"If, indeed, the spoon had been found upon me,"——

At this moment, the door opening, Pops paused in the middle of his sentence, and fixed his eye upon a new visitor, who with enviable self-composure advanced towards the table, and drawing a chair under him, sat down. As he deposited himself, he winked a brassy eye at Pops, distended his mouth, evidently with an intention to smile, and nodded his head. We are happily old enough to remember

the late Mr. Pope's *Banquo;* and we have little doubt that the new-comer had shared in our good fortune; for his action was a servile imitation of that great and gentle actor, in his "blood-bolter'd" capacity. The visitor certainly had not his throat cut, but his smile more than equalled that advantage for the expression of the picturesque and terrible. Pops spoke not—Cheek was silent. Again the visitor winked—again he smiled—again he twitched his head.

"Then it wasn't found upon you, eh?" said the stranger, condescending to speak with a rugged familiarity.

It is a terrible dilemma for a little man, when circumstances occur which insist that he should appear very big. To say that Pops rose from his seat is to impart no idea of the truth; we should rather say, he shot up from it. Standing upon his two great toes, and his neck stretched almost to hanging point, Pops, with a constrained civility—very difficult for a new beginner—asked, if the party addressing him "knew *who* he was?" Were a giraffe gifted with speech, and placed in the predicament of Pops, its gestures could not be more dignified.

"To be sure I do, Mr. Pops," was the answer; and the speaker rubbed his hands upon his breeches' knees, and laughed a hearty laugh. "Know you!"

" Then, sir,"—and Pops abated something of the ferocity of his dignity—" then, sir, you are probably aware that I am an artist of"——

" In course I am ; why it's all over the town."

" Ha, ha !" and Pops chirped in his throat, and, looking at Cheek, cried, in a side speech not lost on the long-eared visitor, " Isaac—ha, ha !—you see she *may* travel by the stage?" But Cheek was not a man to appreciate a delicate touch ; the surest way to make him sensible of a hit was to knock him down.

" By the stage, eh? what! along with you ?" asked the stranger, and again he smiled.

" Yes, yes ; with me," answered Pops, rubbing his hands, winking at Cheek, and feeling even through his bones a glow of satisfaction. " Well, it seems then, sir—I beg your pardon, sir, what may be your name ?"

" Gullet," replied the stranger with apparent " measureless content" at the appellation.

" Well, then, Mr. Gullet, it seems that I—that is, that we—were expected ?"

" We thought we should have you, though not quite so soon," cried Gullet. " Howsomever, I'm very glad that it's fallen to *my* chance to light upon you,—a capital bit of luck."

Pops made a very profound bow ; and even the phlegmatic Cheek declined his head in token of the

compliment. Indeed, there was a heartiness, a sincerity in the manner of the speaker, that demanded an elaborate acknowledgment. Cheek began to feel the dignity of his new calling, assured of his importance by the attention of Gullet, whom he addressed with the blandest condescension.

"A pretty neighbourhood hereabouts—eh, Mr. Gullet?" said the nominal proprietor of wax.

"Yes, very pretty; and you'll—ha! ha! I beg your pardon"—and Gullet passed the sleeve of his coat across his mouth, as if to wipe away even the remains of an unseemly laugh—"you'll have a capital view from the castle."

"So I've heard—so I've heard," said Pops. "A very old and beautiful edifice: there are about it a —a great many historical associations?"

"Ever since assizes were held at——" replied Gullet; who, placing his arm on his thigh, bent his head forwards, and looking keenly in the face of Pops, asked with sudden seriousness—"I suppose you've made your mind up to this business,—you know exactly what's to be done?"

"To be sure—to be sure. By the way, how did you happen to expect us here?"

"Why, the mayor received a letter that"—

"That's like Cox," said Michael aside to Isaac —"just like him; cautious, calculating man—he's

told our business, and bespoken every civility for us, no doubt. What! the mayor received a"——

"Yes; but I had farther intelligence from—— however, no matter for that; here you are."

"I see how it is," exclaimed Pops, expanding with pleasure—"I have no doubt that you are somehow in the service of the mayor himself?"

"In course I am," said Gullet, staring at the vivacity of the artist.

"And that his worship has sent you to"——

"Why, he knows that you are here by this time."

"And when will he be ready to receive us?" asked Michael, nodding towards Cheek, busily employed pulling forth a shirt frill, large as our grandmother's fan, from a shirt, late the property of Mr. Cox. "When will he be able to receive us?" repeated the artist to Gullet, who looked earnestly through the lattice.

"He's ready now," was the answer.

"I'll only change my neckcloth and wait upon his worship."

"Nonsense!" cried Gullet, his lip curling and his eye twinkling—"Nonsense! a man like you would be just as welcome in a coal-sack as in cambric."

"See what it is," said Pops, aside to Cheek—"see what it is to have a mayor who knows what art is." Cheek smiled. "Yes, yes; as my school-

master used to say—'*emollit mores, nec sinit esse feros.*'" Cheek opened his eyes; but, after a moment's hesitation, bowed to the latinity.

"His worship," observed Gullet, "never stands upon ceremony. He settles—eh?—but here it comes;"—and as Gullet spoke, the rattling of wheels was heard; and, in a few seconds, a vehicle, something like a taxed cart, rapidly approached the door of the Silver Stag, followed by a crowd of men, women and children, huzzaing—whooping—screaming.

"Now my dear Mr. Cheek," observed Pops confidentially to him, "you see the influence of art. Had there been an ass—a hog in the mayoralty, no carriage had been sent for us—no huzzaing crowd would have gathered about our chariot. No; we might have come, have performed our task, and gone away again like a pair of nobodies. But you perceive there is a taste in the mayor; and, as a natural consequence, taste pervades the mass." It is a hard matter to deny a speculation when backed by servants, carriage, and horses; therefore, Cheek said nothing. Had the mayor not sent a vehicle, Cheek might have spoken.

"Are we to go in that?" asked Pops, his voice scarcely heard for the shouting outside.

"Yes, so let us lose no time." Gullet opened the door—paused—looked round—scratched his

head, and muttered to himself, "D——d fool! forgot the *cuffs*."

The visitors were met by three other men—as Pops observed, with a twitch of the elbow to Cheek, servants to the mayor—on leaving the apartment, and escorted to the vehicle at the door-step; where they had no sooner presented themselves, than they were met with a shout, which Michael acknowledged with a bow that would have done honour to a congress; Cheek humbly followed his example. This gesture on the part of the visitors was met with a new shout from the gathering multitude, as faithfully and as elegantly acknowledged as the first. Indeed, both Pops and Cheek were so employed in paying their respects to the acclamations of the populace, that sundry sneers uttered by the malignant were wholly unnoticed. Indeed, what man, when he can bow to a shout, would give himself the trouble to prick up his ears to a hiss? Thus Pops and Cheek were driven off amidst hurrahs, and heard no syllable of "d——d villains," "murderous thieves," and such other discords to the triumphant strain.

"Well, then, Becky, I suppose it be all right for thee, since Gullet ha't aken 'em?" said an old beldam, with yellow face and blue lips, to a big red-cheeked girl, gaping from the door of the Silver Stag in a fluster of delight.

"Yes, to be sure it be; now, we shall see if Gullet can't keep his word."

"The reward for the murderers—it be a matter of fifty pounds?" asked the old crone.

"Given by the town, the Lord be thanked!—and Mrs. Mayor, like a good soul, makes it guineas out of her own pocket," answered Becky.

"Well, he's a very little fellow to commit such a horrible murder," said a lank, middle-aged man, with a skein of thread about his neck, and a pair of horn spectacles on his nose.

"Little!" exclaimed a woman, with the voice of a whistle—"little! ye lazy loitering varmint; you know it's spirit, and be cursed to you—spirit!" and her husband—for the man with the thread was her mate in serious matrimony—cast a wary glance at the direction of her fingers, endeavoured to laugh assent to a verity she had so often proved upon him, and, like a magpie, hopped across the way, and reseated himself upon his bench.

"Then I suppose the big one is the burglar?" asked a loiterer.

"They've been the terror of the county," remarked another, leaving the question unanswered.

"Becky!" cried a voice from the Silver Stag, "ye idle toad! come and skin eels."

"Let 'em skin themselves, and be ——," muttered Becky, reluctantly retiring into the house;

and adding something about being "her own mistress in a month."

In the mean time, Cheek and Pops proceeded to their conference with Mr. Mayor.

CHAPTER VI.

Mr. Lionel Mace, the Mayor of——, was, as Pops more than ventured to predict, a patron of the arts. At the very moment he was informed of the apprehension of the two accomplices of the Bridle-road murder, he was giving audience to an actor of considerable provincial celebrity; a man who had refused forty shillings per week for second tragedy at Covent-Garden! As in these days professional self-denial is of rare occurrence, we feel ourselves bound to state the fact, when called upon to name the name of Mr. Flat. The mayor, sacrificing his elegant tastes to public duty, abruptly dismissed the actor on the announcement of the approach of the rival murderers. "But mind, Mr. Flat,—mind sir, if I give you leave to act here, we must have the reglar drama—no nonsense—the real thing—five acts, and no mistake." The manager —for he was no less a dignitary—holding his hat under his arms, rubbed his hands, bowed, and said

—"*Sir!*" No man had a greater command of that simple monosyllable; by means of it Flat carried on his government. To complaint—congratulation—sympathy—abuse—Mr. Wentworth Flat rubbed his hands one over the other, and said, "*Sir!*" His utmost variety was that of gender: now and then he certainly indulged himself with a—"*Madam.*"

"Are these the wretched men?" asked Mr. Mayor, as Pops and Cheek were led into the room. "For God's sake, my good man—I beg your pardon!—you infamous villain—don't laugh," cried Mace, as Pops smiled and smirked like a boy newly breeched. Pops looked up at Cheek for the meaning of Mr. Mayor—and Cheek turned to that officer for the like favour.

"He's very small;" said the town-clerk in a half whisper to the mayor—"very short, indeed; why, if he committed the crime, he must have jumped to stab him."

"My opinion exactly," said Mace, with, considering his office, more than average sagacity. For the first moment Pops seemed to feel there was some mistake; whilst Cheek, who had not the dangerous enthusiasm of his companion, was quite convinced of an existing error. Pops coughed, clenched his right hand, raised himself as he was wont upon his toes, and was about to speak. The mayor, however, noted the imprudence.

"Silence! my dear sir,—I mean, you cold-blooded ruffian—say nothing. Have the kindness—I mean, attend to me. You must know, that by the indulgence of the law of England—why, Gullet—how is this? why ar'n't they handcuffed?"

"Handcuffed!" shrieked Pops, his eyes suddenly lighted like the tails of glow-worms.

"Handcuffed!" uttered Cheek spasmodically, blowing out his face like a foot-ball.

"Handcuffed!" repeated Mace, very sonorously. Indeed, the tones in which the word was spoken by the three persons, imparted to a contemplative ear the exact separate feeling and interest of the speaker. Pops was treble indignation—Cheek philosophical sullenness—whilst Mace spoke as an epicure deprived of a customary luxury.

Gullet, the tipstaff, essayed an excuse. "Don't talk to me, sir—don't talk to me," proceeded Mace, more intent upon venerable custom than upon syntax—"don't talk to me; I take it as a piece of personal disrespect, that I should sit here in presence of the prisoners, without being handcuffed. It's what I've not been used to, sir."

"Prisoners!" cried Pops, and his eyebrows bent more than ever did Cupid's bow bend at the bull's-eye of a maiden's heart—"Prisoners!" and he looked at Cheek, and found some comfort in the plural case. "Prisoners!"

"Oblige me, gentlemen—that is, you wretched men, be attentive. Silence!" and Pops for the third time shut his mouth. "Silence—by-and-by you will be heard. By the laws of England—oh! yes, it's all very well now, but now it's no matter," said the mayor to Gullet, interrupted by the clinking of two pair of handcuffs, the brightness of which lucidly illustrated the morality of the county: in fact, they were a sort of hand-mirrors, "to show *virtue* her own feature."

"But, Mr. Mayor—upon my honour—I"—

"Silence, sir; silence, fellow; don't I tell you that the laws of England allow every man to be heard? Silence, I say; and therefore, hear me. In the happy country to which you belong, it is the proud prerogative of every man to refuse to criminate himself. Justice has cotton in her ears, and won't listen to self-accusation. No, gentlemen—that is, no—it is a part and parcel of our sublime policy that justice should give herself as much trouble as possible, in weighing well the evidence, not allowing the prisoner to have any weight in his own case; he being liberally supposed to know nothing of the matter, and therefore, if hanged, to go out of the world laying his hand upon his heart with the consciousness that he has had no hand in the business. You are quite safe in the testimony of the witnesses; and, therefore, it is my duty as a

magistrate, to request that you will give yourselves no trouble, but leave your case to the prosecution. Now, where is the evidence?"

"If you please, your worship," and Gullet advanced, and stroked his hair down his forehead, with as brilliant success as if his hand had been a blacking-brush—"If you please, your worship, you must take the prisoners' word for once, because they confessed to Mrs. Go, the landlady of the Silver Stag, who sent for me, who"——

"Is Mrs. Go ready for examination?" asked Mr. Mayor.

Mrs. Go, playing with the sinister corner of her shawl, advanced, and said she was quite ready.

"Well, Mrs. Go?" and each eye of the mayor looked an interrogative. "Well, these men confessed to you the murder?"

"Murder!" cried Pops, and he flung his arms about, as if in a pulpit or in a fit.

"Murder!" echoed Cheek, in as lively a tone as though he said—"Marbles."

"I overheard them," said Mrs. Go, mincingly—"for I scorn to have paper in any of my key-holes—I overheard them talking of breaking into prison and taking off the murderer; and after that they—I mean the little man there—confessed outright that he was an artist at such things."

"That is true," said Pops; and as he spoke, he

felt that he was no longer a little man. "That is true," and he bent his head, as though oppressed with the weight of imaginary laurel. If the schoolmaster of Pops had learned Italian, Pops, at that moment, would have exclaimed—"*Ed io anche son pittore!*"

"Mind, understand me—I don't want you to criminate yourselves—but tell me," said the mayor with a frown—"how do you get your bread?"

"Bread!" exclaimed Pops, as though the question ought to have run—"Pray, sir, how do you obtain your daily claret?"

"Yes—bread?" replied the mayor—"I suppose you eat—eh, sir?"

"That they do," cried Mrs. Go, the landlady, remembering the breakfast. The mayor repeated the question.

"Sir—Mr. Mayor—I perceive some extraordidinary mistake—in finding myself before you. I perceive that some error"——

"Your worship," said Gullet, interrupting Pops —"no mistake at all. He seemed quite at ease, when I said you wanted him."

"Very true, Mr. Mayor—very true. I did receive your mandate as a compliment to my profession—and"——

"Profession! why, what are you?" asked Mace. "Profession!"

"I have the honour to be an artist of"——

"You don't mean a painter—a sculptor—a—a something of that sort?" asked the town-clerk.

"Exactly," replied Pops, with the coldest dignity. "And my visit to this town being an express commission to"——

"Dear me! dear me! I see it all, Mr. Mayor," —and the town-clerk whispered to Mace, whose countenance became suffused with the brightest colour, and he laid his hand upon his waistcoat, and bowed his head, and his lips were puckered into a smile, and he seemed to acknowledge some sudden and unexpected honour with the most interesting air of embarrassment. In a brief time, however, he returned to a sense of his duty.

"Gullet, you have acted with great discretion; but, unfortunately, these gentlemen are not the murderers; they are persons of quite a different stamp. Gentlemen, you are discharged; and permit me to say, that you quit this court without a single stain upon your characters. Indeed, I don't know if you ar'n't all the better for the accusation; you are discharged, and"——

"But, Mr. Mayor," called Gullet in a state of anguish, the promised reward fading from his eyes —"remand 'em—pray, remand 'em—there's more evidence—there be, indeed; they confessed that the woman came down with 'em."

"Woman!" said Cheek—"Woman!"

"Yes, Nancy Dawson, that we're after," roared Gullet.

"I protest, Mr. Mayor," said Pops in a solemn voice—"I protest, that I know no woman of that name; and moreover, that I am a married man, and therefore never travel with a woman."

"What! you mean to say that you didn't wink and poke your elbow at that chap, and say—'she *did* travel by the stage?' Will you deny that?"

"Mr. Mayor, I recollect—my friend here will recollect—the purport of my allusion. Finding that my humble reputation was known here, I did remark to Mr. Cheek, that fame—fame, Mr. Mayor, travelled by the stage. I spoke of fame."

"Of Nancy Dawson!" insisted the tipstaff.

"Fame! that bright and glorious maid," exclaimed Pops.

"As great a jade as ever walked," shouted Gullet.

"Order in the court," cried the mayor. "Gullet, you are a good and vigilant officer, and I am sorry for your disappointment. With the blessing of Providence, however, you may yet succeed. These gentlemen are discharged." The accused stepped towards the smiling Mayor; and Gullet, doggedly fumbling the rim of his hat, departed with the unappropriated handcuffs. Mrs. Go, retiring

at the same time, endeavoured, but in vain to console him. "Well, to be sure—it is hard," remarked that excellent woman; "it is hard—and 'twill be a dreadful shock to Becky!"

"I regret, Mr. Pops, the inconvenience you have suffered. Of course you know Mr. Fangleby?" asked the town-clerk.

"Certainly," replied Pops, thinking it prudent to know him at even the shortest notice. "Certainly."

"I—at least on the part of the committee—I requested him to despatch to us an artist of the very highest merit, and I have no doubt that my friend has been happy in his choice."

Pops bowed all over to the compliment. "Will the sessions be heavy?" he asked, modestly turning the conversation from his own merits.

"So-so," replied the clerk. "There is this case which has made such a stir. For my own part, I don't believe that the wretch had any accomplices: I think it all his trick to traverse. By the way, what do you think of your subject?"

"The—the subject I am come to take? Why, I—to say the truth—I am rather pleased with it."

"You see, there is plenty of him. There is a fine, marked, characteristic,"—

"I expected no less from all I had heard," replied the artist. "When do you think I shall be able to begin?"

"Why, we'll settle that over our wine. Of course, you will dine with Mr. Mayor to-day? Ha, sir! he has been a great benefactor to the town."

"He looks like it," observed Pops, acutely apprehending a local patron.

"The mark of respect we are about to pay to him, however admirably executed—and I doubt not its excellence—will be but small compared to the benefits he has bestowed upon the happy town of ——. There, sir, I call that an admirable light," and the town-clerk pointed to Mr. Mayor in earnest talk with Cheek, near the window. The light falling through a blue curtain upon the face of the mayor, softened its general redness with a cerulean tinge. "You dine at three to-day, Mr. Mayor, of course?" said the town-clerk, relieving Mace of Cheek.

"At four—it must be four to-day; for I have to meet Pig, the iron-master, about a contract—business, you know, Mr. Clerk, business;" and Mace thrust his hands into that "ocean to the river of his thoughts," his breeches'-pockets.

"Well, then, Mr. Mayor, as to-day is to me a *dies non*, I will walk with these gentlemen about the town, and return at four. In our stroll I can point out to our friends the many records we have of the munificence of our present mayor."

"Now, don't—don't"—and Mr. Mayor looked

entreatingly at Mr. Town-Clerk: then, recovering himself, he cried, gaily waving his hand, "at four, then, gentlemen,"—and retired through a private door. Mr. Town-Clerk and his visitors left the hall by the principal entrance; not, however, before one of the servants had pointed out Pops to his fellow as the man who was come from London "to take Mr. Mayor's pictur."

The town of—— is one of the five hundred neat, comely, *too* clean towns in which England rejoiceth. We have walked in its streets until the cleanliness has been oppressive. We have absolutely yearned for a bit of mud; yea, our heart hath panted for a gutter. A dead dog in the road would have been accepted by us with thankfulness. But there was no such fillip to be given to the imagination. There is a legend of a half-devoured rat being found before the door of a new-comer, but it wants authenticity. Walking the streets of——, the mind has nothing to repose upon—nothing whereon to expatiate—not a single green cabbage leaf—not even a potato paring. No; our immortal part shrinks back from the cold touch of surrounding primness. There is, so to speak, a varnish of cleanliness upon all things. A woman's nightcap looks like that of our grandmother "cut in alabaster;" and the very boys and girls seemed mangled in their pinafores.

Mr. Town-Clerk led his distinguished visitors from the hall with the air of a man embarked in a most pleasing duty. "Our church, gentlemen," said he, pointing with the finger of triumph to a brick edifice. "They do say, as old as the conquest. I can't exactly say after what order it is built."

"The order of the parish, no doubt," gravely suggested Cheek, looking hard at the structure, and putting both arms under his coat-tails.

"Very good, indeed; very good," said Mr. Town-Clerk, showing a set of very strong teeth. Pops, throwing a look up at Cheek, bit his lip, and whispered "Hold your tongue."

"And there, Mr. Pops—what think you of that monument?" And Mr. Town-Clerk pointed to a black marble tomb with an epitaph in brass letters, and two cherubim heads with palm leaves and trumpets floridly worked in the same durable material. "Mr. Mayor's first wife—a fine woman—best brass—made an excellent mother—capital workmanship—had a tongue to be sure—admirable trumpets—brightened with brick dust every Saturday. The town owes this to Mr. Mayor; but I am sure that he set it up with the greatest pleasure." Then, proceeding up the church—for the party were inside the edifice of questionable order—Mr. Town-Clerk pointed out various tombs, with the

oak effigies of the inmates carefully painted. "Pray, sir, keep your fingers off—the paint is quite wet," a truth which the curious Cheek himself discovered, having wiped the scarlet from the lips of an unknown baroness with his thumb. "All these painted by Mr. Mayor," added Mr. Town-Clerk.

"Very handsome, indeed," said Cheek, "quite like life; it's a pity they haven't glass eyes."

"Ha! that never struck me; it might add to the expression. But if Drawly was here, I could show you the candlesticks—all given by Mr. Mayor. Four immense candlesticks."

"Silver!" exclaimed Cheek, opening his eyes at the supposed munificence.

"Silver-plated," said the clerk, dropping his voice on the last word; and, leaving the church, the party found themselves in another part of the churchyard. "So! Grim's gone at last. You're making his bed, eh, Roger?" said the town-clerk to the grave-digger, hard at his vocation.

"At last, sir"—said the man—"but he almost put us out of patience. Howsomever, when I seed Doctor Cork's grey pony at Grim's door, I knew as how it was all right. Some said because he was a lawyer he'd never die."

"They mostly hang a long while," said the meditative Cheek. "But, bless me! isn't it very deep?"

"His widow ordered it ten feet," said the grave-digger. "All the better for us, you know; it's with us, you know, as with the lawyers themselves; the deeper we go to work the more money we get."

"But why should Mrs. Grim wish her husband buried so deep?" asked Pops, who, influenced by the solemnity of the place, had been some time silent. "Why so very deep?"

"All spite and malice," said the grave-digger with a grin—"it's only to give the devil more trouble."

"You see that shovel and pickaxe," said Mr. Town-Clerk—"both presented to the church by Mr. Mayor."

"I never heard of such benevolence!" cried Cheek, overcome by such frequent manifestations of liberality.

Quitting the churchyard, the party proceeded onward for some minutes, when Mr. Town-Clerk suddenly halted opposite a pair of occupied stocks; constructed with fine providence for the benefit of future generations. The engine was made of stoutest oak, strengthened and guarded with wrought iron. "Look here, gentlemen, said the clerk—"another instance of the kindness of Mr. Mayor. The town owes its very stocks to him; he has not only given us the luxuries of life as are shown in the tomb of

the first Mrs. Mace—but, as you here perceive, he supplies us with its very necessaries."

"He'll meet with his reward, assuredly," said Cheek.

"Only let him wait till I get out," said the drunken tenant of the stocks, until that moment considered sleeping.

The party quitted the delinquent in contemptuous silence. However, they had not proceeded far, when Cheek observed—we know not what led him into the train of thought—"No doubt, Mr. Clerk, the ale about here is very good?"

"Why, sir, we support our historical character." Cheek slightly bowed and smacked his lips. "And now, gentlemen, what do you behold?" asked the Town-Clerk.

"Eight ducks in a pond," replied the exact Cheek.

"Very true; but do you mark the beautifully wrought iron railing, securing from a watery grave the peaceful passengers of this happy town? Three adults and a child were, for ten winters, the average number of deaths. The railing and the posts that support it, were, last November, the gift of our excellent Mayor."

"Beneficent man!" ejaculated Pops.

"Very true, sir—and yet the ingratitude of some

folks! Mr. Mace had been tricked in a contract by Chalybs the ironmonger in the market-place. Well, Chalybs' wife does take a drop; and one dark night, how it happened was never known, Mrs. Chalybs was taken all but dead out of this pond. The very next morning, Mace set his men to work, and in less than a fortnight, the railing you behold was constructed. Now, anybody would have expected the warmest thanks on the part of Mr. Chalybs to our excellent Mayor,"—

"Pray, sir," interrupted Pops, "are you a married man?"

"No," said Mr. Town-Clerk.

"Oh!" said Pops.

"Instead of which, sir," continued Mr. Town-Clerk, "the rancour of Chalybs has been more violent than ever. On every occasion he"—— here the chimes were heard from the church—"but we shall hardly be back in time for dinner."

CHAPTER VII.

Cheek, in cases of personal emergency—and he held dinner to be one—could be a fast walker. Putting all his soul into his heels, he stept forth, and the town-clerk in his turn becoming follower, Cheek was

pursued by that functionary and the trotting Pops. The clock struck four; the Mayor was a punctual man—the dinner was served—the guests were seated. Mr. Pig the iron-master had been prevailed upon by the mayor to meet "the artist," and Mrs. Mace, and her daughter Angelica, bestowed upon him the like honour. For at least half-an-hour a religious abstinence of speech was observed. The party even took wine—and the mayor had pulled out his best—as fishes take water, in perfect silence; whilst Cheek ate, as the camel drinks, for at least half-a-dozen days; beads stood upon his brow, and gravies hung about his mouth.

"Mr. Cheek, may I help you to a little plum-pudding?" asked Mrs. Mayor.

"Plum pudding," said Cheek, "is my weakness;" but Mrs. Mayor helped him as if in plum-pudding she wished to try his strength. "I have often been very sorry, Mrs. Mayoress, to observe so excellent a dish so generally neglected. With a strange superstition—for I can call it nothing more—many, even well-disposed people, make plum-pudding only at Christmas; for my part, with a little beef, a bit of turkey, and a flavour of ham, I do think I could dine on plum-pudding every day in the year."

"This is Angelica's making," observed the mother.

"Is it, indeed?" exclaimed Cheek, "why then, I must"—and he held forth his plate, purely out of compliment to the maker, for a new supply.

And was this all that was said at dinner? asks the reader. We answer, all; assuring the querist that what was said may equal in utility and wit the conversation of even some "cabinet" parties. And in truth we do think, if a legal enactment compelled certain diners to discourse only of plum-pudding, the world would lose but little by the restriction. Plum-pudding may often be more wisely discussed than politics, even by those who eat the one, yet set themselves up to make the other. When men are fully awakened to their true interests, and to the proper use of that golden gift, time, sure we are that they will quit their vain wranglings on what our friend Pops has called "abstract principles," and fix themselves on the solidity of pudding.

"I believe, Mr. Pig," said Mr. Town-Clerk, the cloth being removed, and the wine, cakes, and fruit produced, "I believe, Mr. Pig, you do a little in the arts yourself."

"I should think I did, sir; I should like to know who supplied the iron for the suspension bridge at——."

"Talking of the arts," said Mrs. Mayoress, "how does your book come on?"

"Does Mr. Pig write?" enquired Pops, with an innate veneration for the literary character.

"He hasn't yet appeared in print; but I suppose, Pig," and Mr. Mayor turned to the iron-master, "I suppose, we may expect the history soon?"

"History?" said Pops.

"Yes, sir; *The History of the Origin and Progress of Cribbage*," said Pig, condescendingly.

"It will be vastly interesting," said Miss Angelica.

"Illustrated with the portraits of the most celebrated players. The likenesses"——

"Talking of likenesses," interrupted the Mayoress, "when does the gentleman begin his task?"—and Mrs. Mace looked benignantly at Pops.

"To-morrow, if permitted," replied Michael Angelo with the decision of his great namesake.

"Well, my love," and the Mayoress turned to the Mayor, "What say you?"

"Why, if it must be—it must be," answered Mace in the true spirit of philosophy; and then he added—simpering somewhat—"and yet I could wish Mr. Pops had a better subject, I"——

Here the speaker was interrupted by his shopman, arrived to inform him that Mr. Flat the manager, attended with a list of plays for the inspection of the Mayor, who in his official capacity, had "bespoken" a night.

"Shall we have the fellow up?" said Mace, considerately attending to the feelings of his guests.

"Is he the gentleman who played *Hamlet?*" asked Angelica.

"I don't know—but as he's the manager, I suppose he is; for I've always remarked that these fellows give themselves the best of it," said the Mayor.

"Very true, indeed, Mr. Mayor, and it's terrible for other ladies, where they happen to have a wife—why, there was my wife—I mean"——

Cheek, who sat next to Pops, gave him a vigourous dig with his elbow, and whispered—"Don't, you fool—don't expose us."

The mayor, who had been gathering the voices of the ladies and Pig, heard not the friendly counsel of Cheek; but turned to the man, saying—"You may let him come up; and, stay—poor devil—yes, tell Sarah to bring another glass."

"Now, Mr. Mayor, mind—we must have a tragedy," said Mrs. Mace.

"A tragedy, and a pantomime," suggested Angelica.

"And if I'm to see it, we must have—Oh!—here's the man," and as Pig spoke, Mr. Flat appeared, rubbed his hands, and made a bow.

"Mr. Flat, sit down," said the hospitable mayor.

"*Sir!*" said Mr. Flat, and obediently sat down.

"Mr. Flat, take a glass of wine," and the host pushed the bottle towards him.

"*Sir!*" said the manager, and he filled his glass.

"Well, now," said the mayor, "about this 'bespeak' as you call it; of course I must do as other mayors do?"

"*Sir!*" and Flat was about to relapse into silence, when he opened his mouth, adding—"The world expects no less from your mayoralty."

"I suppose you can give us anything from—from—yes—Shakspeare, upwards?" asked the mayor.

"Or downwards," replied the manager.

"Well, then, ladies—come, choose the tragedy"—said the gallant husband and father; and the manager produced his list.

"I should like *Macbeth*," said the mayoress, "only I have seen Mr. Flat once in it."

"MADAM!" said Mr. Flat, with more than common emphasis.

"Suppose we had *Richard the Third*,—who, now, would play *Richard?*" asked Mrs. Mace.

"*I*, madam," replied the manager.

"And who among you sings the funny songs?" enquired the mayor.

"*Sir! I!*" returned Flat.

"And if we have a pantomime, who will be the Harlequin?" was the question of Miss Mace.

"*Miss! I!*" was the answer of the versatile *impresario.*

"Well, then, we'll say *Richard the Third*, a pantomime, and—eh?"—and the mayor conned the list; "ha! this seems to be a new thing—let us have this."

"*Sir!*" And Mr. Flat received the list. "*Sir!* I beg your pardon—but—the piece you have last selected is chargeable—in fact, sir"—and Flat rolled one hand over the other with considerable animation—"in fact, sir, it is a taxed piece."

"Taxed! A tax upon plays! I never heard of such a thing," exclaimed Pig, "it can't be."

"Explain, Mr. Flat," cried the mayor hastily, suspecting an imposition. "Taxed—what!—like soap and tea?"

"Exactly, sir," replied the manager, pathetically. "We must now pay for new plays, as we have all along paid for candles. The government —not that I ever venture upon politics—but the government has given the death blow to the drama."

"Indeed—drink your wine, Mr. Flat—I have never heard of the matter: pray, how long has this abuse existed?" asked Mr. Mayor.

"A little better than three years, sir; since wher I need not tell you how the drama has sunk in the

estimation of every rational man. Many causes are ignorantly given for this decline; but the true one, Mr. Mayor, is this—the tax upon new plays. When dramatists are to be paid the same as tallow-chandlers, there's an end of the legitimate stage;" saying which, Flat took off his wine.

"You never mean to say, if you play this new piece," asked Pig, with an incredible face, "that you'll have to give the fellow anything as writ it?"

"*Sir!*" cried the manager, "the matter of three shillings."

"Shameful!" exclaimed Pig.

"Infamous!" said Mr. Mayor.

"Who ever heard the like?" asked the mayoress, looking towards the ceiling.

"I'm blessed!" ejaculated Cheek.

"And to say the truth, Mr. Mayor, the drama you have selected is not fit for the stage—at least, I may say, the stage at present is not fit for it."

"What! a dull poor thing?" said Pig.

"A very beautiful thing for the—closet," saying which, Flat imagined that he had passed the bitterest sentence upon the work of the dramatist. "Now, Mr. Mayor, if I might suggest a light, agreeable, elegant little piece—a most delicious and effective little drama—we have had no such capital bits since the new tax—I should say," and the manager placed his finger on the list—"that this would

admirably harmonize with the other entertainments."

"Ha! What!"—and the mayor read the title—"Humph! *The Little Jockey?* What's it about?"

"Is it very genteel?" asked Angelica.

"*Miss!* Remarkably. A young lady, to secure her lover, forms the heroic resolution of going into buckskin breeches and top-boots"——

"Ha!" whispered Pops, unable to controul his feelings—"ha! Mr. Cheek, you should have seen Josephine as *The Little Jockey.*"

"Was she weighed before starting?" asked Cheek. recollecting that "great creature," the preceptress of Parker's-lane.

"And most fortunately we have a new actress coming from the metropolis—a young lady, as the agent assures me, of the most exquisite promise—and the agent is a man of too high honour to be swayed by the paltry fee of seven shillings—a young lady who is dying to have a breeches' part."

"Mr. Flat!" said the mayoress.

"Madam," said the manager, and proceeded—"If, Mr. Mayor, you will permit me to say *The Little Jockey?*"

"Well, as I have other business to attend to just now—*The Little Jockey*—it isn't taxed?" the manager smiled a satisfactory negative. "Well, *The*

Little Jockey be it then. You hear?" said the mayor.

"*Sir*," exclaimed Mr. Flat, finished his wine, rolled up his list, and departed.

"And now, my dear," said Mrs. Mace, "about what we were talking of when the man came?"

"Yes, the object of Mr. Pops's visit," observed the town-clerk, who had silently consumed at least a pound of cherries.

"You say you can begin to morrow, Mr. Pops?" asked the mayor.

Pops bowed.

"Well, how shall you treat your subject?"

"I have not yet determined, Mr. Mayor; but I have a presentiment, that it will be one of the greatest hits of my life."

Mr. Mayor chuckled, and filled his glass.

"But, perhaps, Mr. Mayor, yourself might suggest something."

"To be sure, my dear," said the Mayoress. "What do you think of this dress, Mr. Pops? An apple green coat, a sky-blue velvet waistcoat, and black satin *remainders?*"

"Why, madam," said Pops, deferentially, "we like to be as faithful as possible; and don't you think that dress may be a little beyond the rank of"——

"Beyond, sir?" exclaimed the mayoress, "I can tell you that he wore it the very first day"—

"I beg your pardon—I—I was not aware of that fact—I thought"——stammered Pops.

"I recollect, my dear," said the Mayor, "and every body owned it was very becoming. I think with you that that dress will be the best."

"By the way," said the town-clerk, "I hav'n't shown you where we intend to hang the"——

"No, sir—but in good time—I shall certainly see it," said Pops.

"An admirable place, where every body may have a look—and I doubt not that the execution will afford the most general satisfaction."

"Except to the party himself," remarked the artist.

"Oh! depend upon it," said Mr. Mayor, "you'll not find him difficult. And now, what attitude will you have? Shouldn't there be something in the hand, or"——

"As I said before, we like to be very faithful. Whether I put any thing in the hand or not depends upon the original himself."

"An orange, now, or"—— and Mr. Mayor took one from the table.

"An orange, sir, would be admirable—excellent—if the circumstance were strongly dwelt upon in the newspapers."

"Our own county paper is sure to notice it," said the town-clerk.

"But there's another difficulty," said Pops to the clerk, "people in his situation are apt to be self-willed—and unless we can get the parson to persuade him, he may in his last moments refuse to suck an orange."

"Last moments! why, you would not make a death-piece of it?" exclaimed the quick-eared mayor.

"I should like to give my man to the public just before he was turned off," said Pops, with *gusto*.

"Turned off!" roared the mayor, and "turned off!" shouted the ladies, Pig, and the town-clerk.

"Though perhaps, after all," sighed Pops, "he mayn't be hanged."

Mr. Mayor jumped from the table with a vigour that nearly overturned it, his wife and daughter uttered a shriek, Pig burst into an oath, and the town-clerk exclaimed, "Hanged! Mr. Mayor hanged!"

"Mr. Mayor! I didn't mean Mr. Mayor!" cried Pops.

"By no means—not in the least," asseverated Cheek, looking for the door.

"Then what brought you here?" asked the town-clerk; "were you not sent by my friend Fangleby to paint Mr. Mayor for the Hall?"

"Quite the contrary," said Pops, meekly.

"What do you mean by quite the contrary, fellow?" said Mr. Mayor, suddenly arming himself with the terrors of office.

"I came to model Kemp the murderer for our set."

"Model a murderer!—*your* set?" exclaimed the bewildered functionary; when Pops handed to him a catalogue of the wax-work, at the same time introducing the unwilling Cheek as the "spirited proprietor." Mr. Mayor blew like a porpoise; and sat himself down, rolling his eyes from side to side, perplexed for words sufficiently large to mitigate his indignation. At length, in broken sentences escaped—"A couple of scoundrel showmen—dealers in wax dolls—to dare to come and embezzle a dinner with the mayor of——," and Mace was proceeding with invectives, when Pops—the incarnate spirit of the dignity of art—rose to reply.

"Mr. Mayor, we are neither scoundrels, fools, nor mayors—we neither deal in wax dolls nor in hob-nails—and, for your dinner, there is my half-crown!"

"Half-a-crown!" cried Mr. Mace, startled at the spirit of the artist.

"One plate of veal, sixpence—a plate of fowl, eightpence—plum-pudding, fourpence—potatoes, a penny—two bread, twopence—wine, and dear at

the money, eightpence—and a penny for the waiter!" So saying, Pops stalked with the majesty of "buried Denmark" to the door. Here he paused, crying, "Mr. Cheek—remember—in your reckoning, there are *two* puddings."

CHAPTER VII.

"Well, Mr. Pops, you have made a pretty business of it," said Cheek; the couple having housed themselves at a new inn.

"I have vindicated the dignity of my art," said Pops, depositing his elbow on the table and his brow in his palm.

"If Mr. Cox should discharge you?"

"My honour is without a wound," hastily interrupted Michael Angelo.

"What's the use of one's honour being sound, with no money in one's pocket, and a hole in one's shoe?" asked the practical Isaac. "That people will be so extravagant—I may say so unprincipled, as to indulge themselves in honour when they can't afford the commonest necessaries! It's a conceit I hate."

"To be called a scoundrel—a dealer in wax dolls—a"—

"But—for all you said to the contrary—the wine was unobjectionable," urged Cheek.

"I felt it," said Pops, brooding over the injury, "in my heart's blood."

"And so did I," sighed Cheek; "I'm sure I could have taken a good skinful of it."

"Mr. Cheek, there are insults of which a man of genius is particularly susceptible. It isn't your fault if you can't understand them."

"I thank heaven, I've more sense!" said Cheek with dignity. "To be sure, it's no matter for the genius itself, but it's devilish hard upon the reasonable people who may travel with it."

"Hard!" exclaimed Pops, with the corners of his mouth lowered to his chin. "Mr. Cheek, associated as you and I are, do you know what we resemble?" Cheek shook his head. "I'll tell you, Mr. Cheek—a bat, sir—a bat. You are the mouse lifted by my wings."

"All the worse for the mouse," said Cheek, with more than usual sensibility—"the mouse is much better left alone in his cheese than when flying about upon leather. One eats and gets fat all the year round—the other flits here and there for a few weeks, then goes to sleep for the rest of the twelvemonth to save himself from starving. Oh! I'd rather be a four-legged fat cupboard mouse, with bacon and fine old Cheshire, than a mouse, of what

you call genius, upon wings, flying at gnats and spiders." Pops replied not, but threw up a heavy sigh. "And now, will your genius tell how we are to get the murderer? After your behaviour, Mr. Mayor will never let you into gaol."

"No matter," said Pops, mysteriously.

"No matter! we can't show ourselves to Cox without him: and how will you get his figure?"

"If the worst comes to the worst," replied Pops, —"by inspiration." Cheek stared, for a moment doubting the sanity of the artist. "Did you never hear of portraits painted, statues made, nay, even books written about, when neither the people nor the books were ever seen or read? And what do you call the faculty that effects this?" said Pops.

"Swindling," said Cheek.

"Inspiration," declared Pops.

"Humph!" observed the sluggish Cheek: "no doubt a good deal of money is made by it, call it what you will. For my part"——

Here the speaker was broken in upon by a message from Mr. Mayor, who, guided by the shrewd advice of Mr. Town-Clerk, brought to the artist a permission to visit the gaol. There was a wisdom in this, worthy of imitation by even higher authorities than the mayor of ——: the privilege, so gracefully granted, stopped the mouth of gossip that otherwise might have blabbed the equivoque

which had made Pops and Cheek visitors at the board of Mr. Mace.

The features of Pops brightened, and he bent himself backwards as he received the grateful intelligence. "You see," he said to Cheek—"you see that on some minds professional spirit is not thrown away."

"No—no," said Cheek—"I must say it," and he stooped to pat the artist on the shoulder,—"I must say it, you behaved like a prince—a lad of proper mettle."

"No time is to be lost," cried Pops, airily; and, accompanied by his admiring companion, he took his way to the gaol. The permission of Mr. Mayor had forerun their appearance at the gate, which, turning on its harmonious hinge, admitted them to the prison. They were shown the way into the court-yard by one of the turnkeys—a fellow who looked a part of the stone building, gifted with motion.

"There you'll find your man," said he, pointing to the area, which they had scarcely entered ere they heard a loud yell, and looking round, saw a man beating a boy, who published in sharp treble the castigation.

"You cruel little scoundrel—how would you like it? Suppose I pulled off *your* legs, eh?" and the speaker, a tall, rather good-looking man, raised his

hand over the boy, who shouted for mercy, and promised better behaviour. "A little savage!" said the man, letting the urchin escape, who bounded into the prison, nodding maliciously at his assailant, fixing his thumb at his jugular, and accompanying the gesture with a quick "cluck" of the tongue.

"An impudent rascal!" said Cheek.—"Pray, what has he done?" meaning what had brought him there.

"Look," said the man, showing a crushed butterfly, "this is the third I've taken from him to-day."

"But what is he in here for?"

"He was found getting over an orchard with some apples on him—a young gallows-bird."

"Can you tell me," said Pops, having vainly endeavoured to discover the blood-shedder, "can you tell me where is Kemp the murderer?"

"My name is Kemp," said the champion of butterflies.

"I beg your pardon," cried Pops, flutteringly—"I didn't mean"—

"Don't mention it," said Kemp with the most civil composure, "you only speak according to the indictment."

"I am,"—proceeded Pops, assured by the ease of the culprit—"I am an artist of, I may say, some reputation. You are possibly aware, Mr. Kemp, that some ignorant people have a prejudice against their likeness being taken."

"Yes—they think they shan't live long afterwards," observed the prisoner, crossing his legs and arms, and leaning against the wall. "Well, sir, I hope I am above any thing of that sort."

"I could perceive that, Mr. Kemp, at the first glance. Here, a man of superior habits is soon distinguished. It is the wish, sir, of many patrons of art—and I assure you, we number many of the nobility, gentry, and clergy—to perpetuate your portrait. And as life, Mr. Kemp," said Pops with admirable delicacy—"as with the best, I should say with the healthiest of us, life is uncertain, perhaps you would have no objection to favour me with a sitting as—as soon as your present engagements permit?"

"And what am I to get for it?" said Kemp.

"To certain minds, posthumous fame, Mr. Kemp, cannot be a slight reward for a little condescension on this side the grave. Your refusal will, I am convinced, cause the liveliest disappointment to the public at large, whilst your acquiesence will add a gem to our collection that"—

"Collection! Oh! then there's to be more beside myself?"

"The most admirable collection that—but I beg your pardon, Mr. Kemp—this gentleman is the proprietor," and Pops introduced Cheek. Kemp held forth his hand, whilst Cheek—in compliance

with the nods and signs of the artist—advanced his fingers as though he was about to put them into a rat-trap. His blood turned to cold water, and he gasped again, as Kemp, not insensible of the disgust, kept squeezing the hand of the proprietor.

Pops observed the malicious enjoyment of the culprit, and the terror of Cheek. To create a diversion he therefore adroitly offered to Mr. Kemp the catalogue of figures already in course of exhibition.

"Well," said the prisoner, putting aside the proffered pamphlet with his hand—"let me hear if there are any of my friends among them—that is, if I have ever heard of any of 'em. Because company's every thing."

Pops commenced reading with the most confident air; trolling over the tongue the names of statesmen and heroes, poets and members of parliament. Closing the golden list he cast a triumphant look at the murderer. "And now, Mr. Kemp, what say you—what say you to such names?"

"Upon my soul," said Kemp, "before this moment, I never heard of one of 'em."

"And did you never hear of"—and Pops ran through the catalogue of celebrated assassins.

"That's quite another thing," said Kemp, "where do you think I've lived not to have heard of them?"

"Well, Mr. Kemp, if you will but oblige us, I

can promise you a capital niche between—let me see—oh ! between Mr. Wesley, the famous dissenting minister, and—and"—

"That can't be, sir—no, that can't be; any where else—for I trust to die a member of the established church."

"Any such scruples, Mr. Kemp," said Pops, "shall be most delicately considered. By the way, do you smoke?"

"And chew," said the prisoner.

"A little tobacco, then, might not be offensive?" and Pops graciously presented a packet of the odorous weed to the captive, who, deigning no word, accepted the gift and turned away. "A very civil fellow," said Pops.

"But to shake me by the hand!" cried Cheek. "As I'm alive, I feel quite sick."

"It's nothing—nothing; all in the way of art," said the philosophic Pops.

"Don't talk to me—I—feel as if my hand was covered with blood—and"—

"He'll make an admirable subject," exclaimed the rapt professor.

"It seems to me a stain upon my hand that I can never wipe away," cried Cheek, loathingly.

"He'll bring a great deal of money," said Pops.

"Do you think so?" said Cheek.

"An immense deal of money—my reputation on the fact," asseverated Pops.

"For a murderer—he is—after all—a—a decent sort of fellow," cried Cheek; "and you really think he'll attract?'

"As sure as fate!"

"Well, well—we mus'n't be too hard upon people in his situation—I dare say he meant it as a compliment, and"—and, without finishing his sentence, Cheek became closely reconciled to the tainted hand, for he put it in his pocket.

"Art, Mr. Cheek, is above the prejudices of society. A man who loves his art, will go any where for an expression. I know, sir, I know very well, that this is called low by fine gentlemen, who describe life from drawing-room windows. That's not my way, sir—if you'd give the real thing, sir, you must see it—put your hand upon it—breathe the air of it—live in it. As for any thing else, you might as soon hope to learn Chinese by drinking tea. But here is the murd——I beg his pardon—here is Mr. Kemp."

We are convinced that it was nothing but the high and deep devotion of Pops to his art that compromised his natural horror of the murderer into the exactest civility towards Mr. Kemp. A fashionable portrait painter could not be more complimentary, more considerate towards the little

whims of his sitter, than was Pops towards the ruffian of —— gaol. Thus, when the assassin re-appeared in the court-yard, with a lighted pipe, blowing clouds of the eleemosynary tobacco, Pops approached him with all the grace of which he was capable, asking—"Well, Mr. Kemp—and how is it?—to your liking, I hope?"

"A little too mild—but quantity will make up for quality," said the smoker.

"It shall—it shall," replied Pops, quickly apprehending the hint conveyed.—"And—as delays are dangerous—could you spare half an hour?"—And Pops appealed most dulcetlyto Kemp's consideration.

"With all the pleasure in life," replied Mr. Kemp, and led the way to his cell. One of the keepers cast a look of ferocity at Pops, who, alive to the appeal, placed a dollar in his hand, and walked on.

"You wouldn't wish to be taken smoking?" said the artist, about to commence his labours.

"Why, I don't think a pipe improves the face," said Kemp, being unconsciously of the same opinion as Minerva. "But, after all, Mr. Pops, what does it matter, when Tom Kemp is come to this?" and knocking the bowl of the pipe against his thumb-nail, the ashes fell upon the stones.

"We should have some regard to posterity, Mr. Kemp. The decencies of life are not to be forgotten even at our last moments."

"There—will that do?" asked Kemp, placing himself in an attitude, having first laid down the pipe.

"That would do admirably," replied the artist, "only I have a Henry the Eighth in exactly the same position. If, now, Mr. Kemp, you could throw yourself into the attitude in which you committed the"—Kemp glared at him—"the most interesting act of your life—I should take it as a most lasting favour. It might, perhaps, bring out the muscles in a way that should prove an agreeable novelty. You must not think me pressing—but the truth is, in the exhibition of such subjects we are compelled to be very careful—the theatres run us so confoundedly hard; there's no keeping a—a —piece of strong nature to one's self for 'em. Thank you," said Pops, bowing profoundly, as Kemp placed himself. "Flattery apart, I do think, Mr. Kemp, you'll make a great sensation."

"Upon my life, I think so—and I never compliment," said Cheek, with the air of a patron.

"It's unfortunate that we shall miss the Midsummer holydays—otherwise, the young ladies would have abounded."

"You think so? Well, to be sure," and the

speaker grew an inch, "Tom Kemp has had his bits of luck in his day."

"Why there's ——, and ——, and ——," said Pops, naming a few of the illustrious infamous—"they're especial favourites with the boarding-schools. Though we've got Lord Byron in his Greek cap, and Mr. Hume with the "Ready Reckoner" from his own library, they stand no chance—a little more to the left—thank you, Mr. Kemp; no, they stand no chance with them."

"I suppose we are all in one room?" asked Kemp, anxious for the future whereabout of his image.

"We scorn to make any difference. You'll be in admirable company. No—there's just the same fame for you as for the best of 'em: if you'd found out a new world, you'd have had no bit the better place."

For three days Pops continued at his task, and succeeded in obtaining a living likeness of one who was about to become the late Thomas Kemp. Every day Pops narrated to Cheek—who refused to pay a second visit to the prison—his professional success: the head was finished the very day before the trial of the prisoner came on. As, however, the whole facts of the case, from the death-blow to the execution and hanging in chains (the fetters being the gift of Mace the mayor), are to be em-

bodied in a play for one of the national theatres, we will not wipe the bloom from what is expected to be the greatest dramatic novelty of the season, by any detail of the matter. Enough for us to say, that Kemp was convicted on the clearest evidence.

On the evening of his conviction, Pops—who had won the heart of the head turnkey by a promise to model his wife's child—gained access to the prisoner. We are not ourselves in all hours, says the adage; and Kemp had evidently been put out of his temper by the address of the judge. To shorten our tale, Pops returned to his inn like a man possessed.

"What's the matter?" cried Cheek—"my dear Michael, what ails you?"

"Ails me?—a ruffian!—that I—an artist—I—who have modelled kings—made a dozen princes—that I"——

"What *is* the matter?"

"That villain Kemp!" exclaimed Pops, choking with indignation.

"Good God! he's not acquitted?" cried Cheek, presaging a lost attraction.

"Not so bad as that—but my head!—would you believe that he has insulted my head?"

"Struck you?" asked Cheek, very calmly.

"I mean—my head of his head. Would you think it—you saw the man—now, would you believe

that human vanity could be so base—you saw the fleshy pimple on the left side of his nose?"

"I remember—almost as big as a pea," said Cheek.

"Bigger, much bigger, Mr. Cheek; and so I modelled it; when the villain swore that I was a bungler—an ass—a fool that wanted to disgrace him in the eyes of the world, to scandalize him in the grave; and so saying he seized his head and dashed it down upon the stones. Never mind, Mr. Cheek, it's all here; in two days you shall see the head again. Yes, he swore that I had enlarged the pimple out of pure malice."

"Then he objected?"—

"He objected to nothing but the pimple. He didn't mind standing with the knife in his hand with which he had done the murder—nay, before the trial he had sold me the very clothes he wore when he killed the man—every thing from hat to shoes; and with the very weapon, in his identical clothes, he consented to go down to posterity, but he swore that his ghost should haunt me if I dared to put upon his nose a pimple."

"It was hardly as big as a pea," said the aggravating Cheek.

"I say, Mr. Cheek, much bigger—but whether bigger or less, is not now the point; he has insulted *me*—the artist—and curse me if now I don't give him a pimple as big as a marble!"

We regret this expression on the part of Pops; but we must beg of the reader his most liberal extenuation for the many coarse and vulgar subjects which had, doubtless, narrowed the mind of the artist. If he had been capable of rising to the dignity of historian or biographer of great men, elevated by the task, it is impossible that, out of personal spite, he could have magnified a little pea into a large marble. Historians and biographers are incapable of such meanness.

CHAPTER IX.

"Can nothing be done to bring in these turnips?" asked Manager Flat of his property-man on the morning preceding the night of the mayor's state visit. "Surely, they might be made a feature. Can nothing be done with them?"

"I have told you no, sir, twenty times," was the unsatisfactory reply.

"*Sir!*" was the monosyllabic reprimand of the manager, and the property-man departed. "*Madam!*"—and this time the manager addressed a lady in a faded pink silk, with a reticule as big as a barrister's-bag.

"Good morning, Mr. Flat. Bless me! I hope

the orchestra will be here—I must go through '*The Boy in Yellow.*'"

"*Madam!*" which implied that every necessary attention would be paid to the new actress. "By the way, madam, I believe you dance?" The lady curtsied an affirmative. "Did you ever dance the egg hornpipe?"

"Never, sir," said the lady with commendable humility.

"*Madam!* Three seasons ago I got up a pantomime at an immense expense. To effect a proper illusion, it was necessary that twelve turnip lanthorns should be constructed—well, madam, the pantomime did not realize, and for three years the turnips have lain dormant. Yet, for three years have I considered how to employ them. It now strikes me that you might dance the hornpipe, substituting turnips for eggs; the hornpipe will consequently be on a much grander scale."

"But, really, sir—as I never saw the egg hornpipe"—

"A very charming thing: the eggs are placed in a circular direction, and the lady, being blindfolded, dances in and out of them, breaking one egg with her foot before she goes off to show a generous public that there is no deception."

"Yes, sir; but it's impossible that I could break a turnip by stepping on it."

"*Madam!*" and the manager looked downwards —"*Madam!* have a better opinion of your foot."

"Now came still evening on," and several pairs might be seen straggling towards the theatre, distant about half a mile from the town, and judiciously placed at the end of two fields; we say judiciously, inasmuch as the walk tended to win people from "the fever and the fret of life," and to purify and elevate their souls for the true enjoyment of the drama. Here and there a little boy, with gravity in his face, and a bundle under his arm, plodded towards the temple, to deposit at the stage-door the meretricious ornaments of the lady or gentleman who lodged with his mother. At an early hour, at least ten persons were descried from the theatre crossing the fields, and all things promised an enthusiastic and overflowing audience. Caught by the general intoxication, Pops and Cheek had resolved to patronise the drama in a way in which much patronage is awarded, namely, to obtain, if possible, a free admission. "Are we not professional men?" asked Pops, as Cheek ventured to doubt the success of the experiment.

At a few minutes to seven Cheek was to be seen standing in the middle of the first field looking loftily around. A lady passed him with a hurried step, bending her eyes to the earth to escape his glance. With the calmness of Socrates, he looked

on her receding form, when he felt a hand upon his shoulder, and the interrogative "Do you know that lady?" accompanied the action. "I have not that pleasure," replied Cheek. "Humph! well, she looked as if she knew *you*, and started like"—and the speaker, leaving the sentence unfinished, stalked towards the theatre. "Surely I have seen that man before," thought Cheek—"to be sure—yes—Pig, the iron-master. But, where the devil is Pops?"—so saying, he turned to seek, when he espied the artist running from an adjoining field towards him, waving something in his hand, and followed by a boy screaming at the pitch of his voice.

"Would you believe it, Isaac? Who do you think is the *Little Jockey?*" and before Isaac had time to speculate, Pops exclaimed—"Josephine! my wife!"

"Impossible! what! have you seen her?" asked Cheek.

"No! but look here—here she is," and Pops displayed to the proprietor an ample pair of doe-skins.

"She! why, they are"—

"Josephine's—my dear Josephine's."—Cheek looked incredulity—"What!" and Pops energetically grasped the article in his hand—"do you think that I don't know the leather—I'd swear to it from a thousand skins!"

"Oh, goodness me!" cried the boy—"pray give 'em to me—I've got to take 'em to play-house—and I was only showing 'em under that hedge to Billy Rogers, when you"—

"Little boy—you say the lady lodges at your house?"—said Pops.

"Yes, sir; and my mother will kill me."

"Go to the lady, and when she asks you for the doe-skins—tell her that the gentleman who has the dearest right to them—mind, who has the dearest right to them—now holds them, and must be personally applied to."

"Oh, sir—pray, sir!" and the child jumped as if upon hot iron.

"Little boy, don't make a noise. I shall be at that tavern," and Pops pointed to a near pot-house. "That tavern. What is it called, boy?"

"The Horns, sir."

"She will find me there," and Pops strided towards the house, carrying the bundle, and followed by the passive Cheek, whilst the boy, blubbering anew, ran to the stage-door to inform the representative of the *Little Jockey* of her unforeseen destitution. The boy was suffered to pass behind the scenes, and trembling, made his way to the dressing-room in which was the lady, unconscious of her loss, practising her song.

"The boy in yellow wins the day,"

rang through the vaulted roof, when the child knocked at the door.

"Who's there—and what do you want?" asked the fair vocalist.

"If you please, ma'am,—it's—it's—the yellow I've come about. The breeches are gone, ma'am!"

"Gone!" shrieked the despoiled, hysterically. "Gone!" But let us quit the scene of misery that ensued, and return to its unrelenting cause.

Pops and Cheek were seated in the room of "The Horns." Cheek, finishing his glass of gin-and-water cried—

"Ha! there's some sense in this," for, as we have before adumbrated, Cheek was not theatrical.

"I am delighted, Mr. Cheek, that in the acting of Mrs. Pops you will this evening have an opportunity of seeing many quiet touches of nature. Don't be carried away by a want of applause: Josephine's style is a little too true to life to touch the vulgar."

"Isn't it odd," asked Cheek, "that she should leave town without your knowledge?"

"My dear Isaac, it was indiscreet—very indiscreet; for which reason I have impounded this," and Pops laid his hand upon the bundle. "But, poor thing! though she loves me with a devotion that is sometimes troublesome—yet her affection for the art is so intense she cannot struggle against it."

"But I heard it was a young, unmarried lady who was about to appear; I forget who told me, but I"—

"That's all the policy of the manager." Cheek stared. "You see, Mr. Cheek, the marriage state, though a very respectable invention, is not—as present taste runs—is not so attractive for a play-bill. Maids—though supposititious—draw more than real wives. I know a manager, a most respectable man, who won't have a wedding-ring in his whole company."

"She seems to take her loss very coolly," said Cheek at the end of an hour, and at the conclusion of four glasses of gin-and-water; in which number he was faithfully accompanied by Pops, who gradually became all the better for liquor, for he did nothing but eulogize the sweetness, the gentleness, the commanding intellect of his adorable Josephine.

"A woman of a million, Cheek—another glass of gin-and-water—a woman with the mind of a giant, but with the delicacy of a sylph—a creature entirely made of brain and heart—a child of nature, with"——

The tribute of connubial praise was interrupted by the appearance of Mr. Pig, who swelled into the room, and with his sternest looks, and his largest voice, abruptly addressed himself to Pops.

"I believe, sir—indeed, sir, I am well informed,"

—the face of the little boy despoiled of the bundle was here visible at the skirt of Pig—"that you have possessed yourself of the valuable property of a lady engaged at the theatre?"

"I have, sir; and what then?" replied Pops, with all the dignity to be obtained from gin-and-water. "And what then?"

"Then, sir, in the name of that lady, I order you to give it up!"

"*You* order—*you!*" and Pops gasped for breath. "Do you know who that lady is, sir?"

"No one better, sir."

"That lady, sir—is—is"—and Pops turned blue with wrath, and Cheek finished the sentence—"his wife!"

"Pooh—pooh!" said Pig.

"Pooh—pooh!" cried Pops in amazement at the iron-master.

"She has made me her confidant in the matter—she has told me that you have some claims upon her—but those claims I am here to satisfy. And let me tell you, Mr. Pops, that you have taken a very unmanly, and—but it's no matter—in one word, will you give up the breeches, and?"——

"But with my life," shouted Pops, flinging up his right arm to its full extent, and hugging the bundle to his heart with the left.

"There's thirty shillings," and the iron-master

put down the sum in silver on the table—"which will cover your claims upon the lady—thirty shillings, and now"—

Pops, gnashing his teeth, deigned no answer, but with the edge of his hand scattered the half-crowns, shillings, and sixpences upon the floor; and then, stood pale and aghast, still hugging the bundle.

"Very well: you are witnesses,"—of course the landlady and maid could not be absent—"you are witnesses that I have tendered the money. And now, my fine fellow," and Pig buttoned his coat very vigorously—"we shall see what law can do for you." Delivered of this, Pig vanished from the room.

"My good man," said the landlady to Pops—"now is the woman really your wife?"

"Ha! can you be sure of it?" asked the maid.

"Cheek—Isaac"—cried Pops, waking as from a stupor—"you will be my friend?—my honour, Isaac—my honour!"

"There's another sixpence somewhere," said Cheek, despondingly, he having picked up twenty nine shillings and a tester during the address of the iron master.

"My heart is broken, Isaac—a glass of brandy," sobbed Pops.

"Two," exclaimed Cheek, and moved by sympathy, squeezed the hand of the artist.

"That Josephine—that she—I—but you'll stand by me, my friend—you'll?"—the brandy being brought, Cheek and Pops swallowed it with admirable precision. "And now, Isaac—now we'll see the stuff that a British audience is made of"—and the wronged husband, still hugging the bundle, slapped his thigh, and rushed into the air. Touched by his injuries, Cheek was about to follow his example, when he was stopped for the bill. This he paid, minus sixpence, which he assured the landlady was "on the floor."

The two friends paced with giant strides, towards the theatre. Arrived at the pay-place, Pops—it was, happily, half-price—laid down a shilling, and with Cheek, entered the pit in time to hear *Richard* assure *Richmond* that "the chance was *his*." The house was filled with the beauty and respectability of the town of——. The mayor, mayoress, Angelica, and Mr. Town-Clerk, with a few private friends, occupied the principal box. Under ordinary circumstances, Pops would have found it difficult to obtain a centre place in the pit, but what could withstand the feelings of a husband, panting for revenge? He sat in the middle of the arena, the bundle upon his knee, vainly beckoning Cheek to advance from the side, to which his deference to the company already seated, attached him. The curtain being down, let us, from our sheer incapa-

bility to describe it, draw a veil over the misery of Pops. He sat, the bundle on his knees—his elbows on the bundle—his chin in his hands—his teeth set, and his eyes fixed, sweating with revenge and liquor. The curtain remained down; and—in the brain of Pops—the green-eyed monster continued to rise up! The audience showed symptoms of impatience; and it was with a grin of fierce delight that Pops heard voices from the gallery exclaim—"Little Jockey—Little Jockey!" He wriggled himself on the bench, and plunged his elbows deeper into the bundle, and shifted his chin in his hands. "Little Jockey—Little Jockey!" cried the Arcadians in the gallery, and a deep groan burst from the throat of Pops.

"Why, they *are* a long time," said an elderly matron seated by Pops, and interpreting his groan as a mark of censure at the delay—"They are a long time, sir; but I think it's always best to leave groans to the gallery." The tumult swelled—a cry for "Little Jockey" was mingled with the call for "manager"—shouting, hissing, stamping, whistling, with other sounds at the command of a civilized audience. Apples were thrown upon the stage—two or three candles at the back of the gallery were extinguished—and many of the younger women showed signs of alarm—whilst elder ones, with a fine moral courage, assured them there was nothing to fear. It was very disrespectful to the

mayor, who conveyed his displeasure by sundry big looks to the rioters—still the storm raged higher, and it was not until a fine heroic fellow in the gallery, exclaimed—"let's pull up the benches?" that the cry for "Manager"—"Flat"—"Manager," was met by the appearance of Mr. Wentworth Flat himself. Strange to say! in an instant, the roar subsided; not a sound was to be heard, save the hard breathing of Pops, his elbows still glued to the bundle.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said Mr. Flat—with exquisite unconsciousness—"may I ask, what it is you desire?"

"Little Jockey—Little Jockey!" was roared from gallery and pit, and Pops laughed hysterically at the response.

Mr. Flat paused to reply, when a voice addressed him from the gallery—"Mr. Flat!"

"*Sir!*" said the manager, putting his hand to his heart.

"I suppose thee call'st thyself master of these folk?"

"*Sir!*" answered Flat, wishing to imply that he did.

"Well, then, if thee be'st master, why dost not see that they *dooes* their work? Where be *Little Jockey?*"

"*Sir!*" and then addressing himself to the

audience: "Ladies and gentlemen, is it your wish that the performance should go on?"

"Yes—yes—yes," cried the whole audience, when Flat bowed and retired from the stage amidst a general burst of applause; affording another proof that in this world there is nothing so unaccountable as applause. There was a further delay of five minutes, during which Pops continued to wipe his brow with his hand, keeping one elbow rigidly on the bundle. Five minutes more elapsed, and then a murmur ran through the house, deepened into a groan, and burst into a loud shout for "Little Jockey." The call was so imperative that the manager rushed on, whilst sparks of flame darted from the eyes of Pops, and he sat with gasping ears.

"Ladies and gentlemen," cried the manager with a look of prostrate misery.

"It won't do, Flat," exclaimed the orator from the gallery.

"*Sir!* Ladies and gentlemen, this is, perhaps, the most painful moment of my life. That on an event like the present—patronized as I am by the highest authority of the town of ——" applause from Mr. Town-Clerk and friends in mayor's box —"I say, that such an accident should have occurred on such a night, is to me—a—but, ladies and gentlemen, I remember the proverbial genero-

sity of an English public"—great applause—"and I feel bold enough to hope"—Mr. Flat paused.

"Little Jockey," screamed a child's sharp voice from the gallery, and Pops recognised in its owner the carrier of the bundle. "Little Jockey!"—"Little Jockey!" it repeated, growing higher—"Little Jockey!"

"Give that child the breast," said a cynic from the pit; and then to Mr. Flat—"Go on, sir."

"*Sir!* The young lady who was to have had the honour of appearing before you in the part of *The Little Jockey* has met with a most unlooked for disappointment. Her dress was to have come down by the mail—by some afflicting accident it has not yet arrived"—Loud cries of "shame, shame." Mr. Flat continued: "As, however, the drama of *The Little Jockey* is not one of those ephemeral modern productions produced within the meaning of the *act*—one of those tailor dramas depending upon wardrobe—as its attraction lies in the minute development of the character—the display of passion—the brilliancy of dialogue—and the exquisite conduct of the plot—it will, I am sure, be no drawback to the enjoyment of an enlightened audience, if, for this night only, the young lady appears in the part of *Arietta*, without her usual clothes?" A tremendous burst of applause; upon which the

manager thinking, with the orator of antiquity, that from the cordiality of the shout, he must have unwittingly said something very foolish, subjoined —"I mean, ladies and gentlemen, without the dress of the *Jockey*, substituting for it a pair of white trowsers, kerseymere waistcoat, and brown frock, most handsomely lent to her on the shortest notice by Mr. Valentine, the walking gentleman."

"No—no—no—no!" "Jockey dress"—"cap" —"breeches"—"no, no"—"Jockey dress"—was shouted from various parts of the house, together with "shame"—"robbery"—"give us back our money"—"Jockey dress"—"breeches!"

"Upon my honour, ladies and gentlemen, they have not come by the mail, and"——

"'Tis a lie—a lie—a lie," shouted Pops, springing upon the bench with a bundle under his arm.

The whole audience rose, and there was a general cry of "hear him—hear him! Where is he?" for the pit having risen to a man, Pops was not visible. Still, though unseen, he continued to cry "a lie—a lie!" and numerous inquirers shouted "Where is he?"—"Give him a lift!" said some; "Hoist him up!" said others; and, in obedience to what became a general wish, a broad-backed six feet yeoman lifted Pops upon his shoulders, the artist still clinging to the bundle. A general burst of applause greeted the elevation of the gentleman

who had given "the lie" to the manager. "Hear him!" rang through the house.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said Pops, "many causes are stated as the ruin of the legitimate drama"—A loud "Oh!" was uttered by the audience, followed, however, by a charitable "hear him!" Pops continued. "The principal cause is in the people that have become managers: they keep no faith with an enlightened public—they"——

"Breeches!" cried an impatient hearer.

"I am coming to them, ladies and gentlemen," said Pops, vehemently. "I say, that managers lend themselves to the grossest frauds—by every kind of trick they endeavour to obtain"——

"Breeches!" exclaimed another voice, upon which Mr. Wentworth Flat advanced a step, and said—

"*Sir!* may I ask what your oration has to do with the dress of the *Little Jockey*—the dress detained in London?"

"Bravo, Flat!" was shouted, followed by a round of applause.

"Left in London?" crowed Pops, with a malignant laugh. "Ladies and gentlemen, I hold in my arms the complete dress of the *Littl eJockey*—and that young gentleman in the gallery can testify how I became possessed of it—and moreover, I can,

at two days' notice, produce Mr. Nathan's receipt for the articles, purchased by me for my lawful wife."

"Your wife!" exclaimed fifty voices, and the interest increasing, a dead silence ensued.

"Yes, ladies and gentlemen; and I put it to you, whether as wives, mothers, husbands and fathers, you will patronise a manager, who, to strengthen his bill, encourages wives to elope from their husbands and families, and to appear on these boards —boards which a Siddons has trod, and a Grimaldi has tumbled upon—under the protection of a man, who—who"——Pops could say no more, but wept copious tears of gin-and-water.

"Shame"—"shame"—"infamous"—was levelled at the head of Flat, the mayor very significantly shaking his hand in horror of the manager.

"*Sir!*" said Flat, in answer to the gesture—and then turning to the audience—"Ladies and gentlemen, upon my character as a husband and a father, this is all a foul, a wicked calumny."

"Look, ladies and gentlemen!"—and Pops untied the bundle with his fingers and teeth—"look! here is the yellow cap—the yellow waistcoat and sleeves—and here the breeches—and—and"——

Pig at this moment appeared at the back of the mayor's box, and Pops, entwining his feet about

the neck of his supporter, flung himself forward like a flying Cupid, and the breeches in one hand, and the sleeves and cap in the other, shook them towards the iron-master, exclaiming, "And there—there is the man who has destroyed my peace—there is the man who has ensnared my Josephine—there is the vile seducer!"

Pig turned like blue and white marble at the accusation—the ladies in the box with a short shriek, instinctively clutched their clothes, and started from him, whilst considerably more than one voice cried out to "throw him over."

Even the presence of the mayor failed to allay the virtuous indignation of the house. There never was such a tumult, as the reporter of the county paper subsequently assured his readers, "in the memory of the oldest play-goer." In the midst of the storm, Mr. Flat vainly endeavoured to be heard himself or to obtain a hearing for Mr. Pig, who had advanced to the front of the box, which he kept striking with his clenched fist, in a way to do credit to the best ironworker. At length, the manager rushed from the stage; and in a short time returned leading on a lady—the lady engaged to make her first appearance in the *Little Jockey.* The lady, with swimming eyes, curtsied to the audience, but—and it is an everlasting blot upon the men of the town of ——, that she was assailed with

" off"—" off"—" no"—" no"—" horrible"—and other epithets of opprobrium and disgust. " A wretch !"—" Poor dear man !" exclaimed some of the ladies, seeing Pops start, and let fall the Jockey dress, and clasp his hands when the lady appeared. And well he might; for he beheld not a faithless and truant wife, Josephine Pops—but his wife's most promising pupil, Miss Margaretta Boss. " The creature !" cried the ladies, and prepared to depart; the men still shouting and hallooing. However, this much may be said for many of them; many declared that they should have supported the supposed runaway wife, if their own wives had not been present; and that they were indignant for the time, merely to keep peace at home.

We must do Pops the justice to state, that when he became conscious of the injury he had inflicted upon Miss Boss, he tried all in his power to explain away the mistake. He roared, shouted, gesticulated, foamed at the mouth, and continued to point to Miss Boss, who with her clasped hands held to her throat, and her head turning from side to side like a toy mandarin, stood the image of entreaty and despair. It was of no use; the audience took his action for emotion at his wrongs, and his pointing to Miss Boss, as a defiance to her to prove the falsehood of his assertion. And more than all, the mayor's box was cleared of its inmates, save

Pig, who stood manfully forward. All the ladies in the boxes took the hint set by the mayoress —the females in the pit and gallery indignantly tied on their bonnets, and, followed by their reluctant husbands and sweethearts, quitted the house —nearly all the lights were extinguished, and Miss Boss loud in hysterics. Fortunately, the iron-master occupied the box nearest the stage, and vaulting from it at the critical moment, caught the falling young lady in his arms. His action was met by the few bachelors lingering in the pit and gallery, with loud applause, and cries of "bravo," above which might be heard the shrill voice of the bundle-carrier calling "Little Jockey!"—"Little Jockey!"

"This is a pretty business," said Cheek to Pops as they returned over the fields; "you've ruined the woman."

"I went by the doe-skins," said Pops. "How was I to know that Josephine had sold her the dress? And why—why didn't she explain how she had forgot to pay her for it, when she sent me the thirty shillings' balance by her friend the iron-master?"

CHAPTER X.

A herald, with a silver trumpet, shouting in the streets of ——, would have failed to convince the denizens of that virtuous town, of the entire innocence of Miss Boss. Not only, as she pathetically lamented, was her character ruined, but her benefit was blasted. Mr. Pig, the iron-master, was injured only in reputation; his pocket was invulnerable. Even the most charitably disposed, canvassing the circumstance, declared "there must be something in it." Mr. Flat had vainly called upon Pops to induce him to give a true history of the affair in the county paper; but Pops declared it to be a fixed principle of his life to have nothing to do with editors. "No, no," said he, magnanimously, "people who can't live down such mistakes, ought to die as soon as possible." Pops being inexorable to the entreaty of the manager, Miss Boss sought to assail him through his friend.

"I believe, sir," said the young lady, whose name had been announced to the astonished Isaac by the waiter—"I believe, sir, I have had the pleasure of meeting you before?"

Cheek instinctively placed the back of his hand

to his nose; and then, recovering his self-possession, replied, "In Parker's Lane, madam." Miss Boss bowed.

"Oh, heavens! sir," exclaimed the lady, plunging at once *in medias res*—"what is to be done? Save me, sir—save me!"

"Madam!" cried Cheek, falling back from the affecting passion of the petitioner.

"It isn't here, sir, as in some towns, where such a circumstance might be the making of an actress—but here, a benefit depends upon private character," and Miss Boss sobbed.

"It's a great pity," said the sympathizing Cheek.

"It's dreadful, sir. But since Mr. Pops is so cruelly obstinate—since he seems so bent upon my destruction—you, who know my innocence"——

"I, madam!" exclaimed Cheek, as if accused of some enormity.

"You, who know my innocence, will, perhaps, undertake my defence! You will write a letter—you will appeal to a generous but abused public—you will champion the cause of an afflicted, heart-broken woman—you will be to me a friend, when all—all—all—all"—and Miss Boss became inarticulate with emotion, and to make her cause stronger, began to faint. Cheek retreated from her approaching weakness; but, following close,

and wringing his hand in hers, she fell upon his arm, as the door opened, and discovered Mrs. Josephine Pops and Mr. Pig, the iron-master.

"Very well, ma'am—very well, I am satisfied—quite satisfied—I wish you joy of your friend, ma'am," exclaimed Pig, trembling with passion.

"Joseph!" cried Miss Boss, running at the iron-master, who gathered himself up, and smiled a ghastly smile of scorn, "I assure you, I came here to seek Mr. Pops, I"——

"I know you did ma'am," said the wife of Pops, clapping her hands to her hips. "I know you did! Yes—I have discovered it all. He must come here to model, forsooth; and you must come here to meet him; you—whose fortune I have made—you, to whom I have taught my own by-play of *Lady Teazle*—the pantomime of *Fenella*—the songs of *Polly*—the dance of *Letitia Hardy*—you, to destroy the peace of a happy, faithful, gentle wife, the mother of four children, and who is now"—Mrs. Pops could say no more, but leapt at the bonnet of her pupil, and, clawing it off, she then caught Miss Boss by the hair, who turning round, fixed her hands in the tresses of her assailant. On this, Pig threw his arms around the waist of Miss Boss, and Cheek, paying the like attention to Mrs. Pops, the women scratched, and the men pulled. Cheek and Mrs. Pops had this advantage over

their opponents; they weighed more than double. Hence, after much unequal tugging, Cheek and Mrs. Pops conquered by their own gravity; for Miss Boss, letting go her hold, Cheek fell, and still embracing Mrs. Pops, brought her down with him. Nor was this all; for the proprietor, falling against a highly-polished mahogany buffet, split the pannel like glass—and a large china punch-bowl on the top, moved by the concussion, descended, breaking into pieces on his head. At this moment, Pops, the landlady, landlord, and all the inmates of the house, crowded into the room. What was the horror of the artist to see his wife lying in the arms of Cheek, screaming, and triumphantly waving in her hand the wig of Miss Margaretta Boss! What the perplexity of the landlord to see his shivered pannel—what the horror of his wife to behold her broken china! Nor must we omit to cast a pitying glance at the fair pupil, despoiled of her wig—blushing, sinking, swooning under the fiery glances of the enlightened iron-master! We think the landlord did not express himself too strongly, when he positively declared that "he would have no such doings in his house."

Mrs. Pops threw one look at her husband, exclaimed—"Oh, Pops!" and adding some words about "further proof," words almost unintelligible

from the infirmity of the speaker, rushed up stairs into the bedroom of her helpmate. "Where—where can I get a constable?" cried Miss Boss, resolving to throw herself on the laws of her country. "Hallo!" exclaimed one of the servants, tapping the window, and beckoning to a man at that moment on the other side of the way—"Hallo," and in a minute the summons was answered by the appearance of Gullet. "This young woman," said the landlord, "has been shamefully used by these people, and"—and here the speaker pointed to Pops and Cheek.

"My name, sir, is Boss," said Margaretta to Gullet—"My name is Boss, and I charge"——

Gullet looked knowingly at Pops and Cheek, and then turning to Miss Boss, a little familiarly took up her elbow between his finger and thumb, and said, "Upon your soul and body now, isn't your name Nancy Dawson?"

"Boss—Margaretta Boss—and I want to swear my life against an infamous woman—oh, sir!" and she turned to Pig, who was slinking off, "and after all—all—will you—can you leave me now?" Pig could, for he did.

"Yes, yes, you'd better come to Mr. Mayor," said Gullet, and he proceeded to hand the injured woman from the room, and she quitted the house, followed by Cheek and Pops, given into custody by

the landlord, for the broken china and damaged mahogany.

The inn last patronized by Pops and the "proprietor" was superior to the Silver Stag; indeed, it was the principal hotel, and as Mr. Cox, when he travelled, with a wisdom we cannot condemn, always selected such an asylum, he was—about half-an-hour after the departure of his artist and party for the hall—seated in the best room of the Blue Lion. He had ordered dinner for two; for the sixty-ninth son of the Shah Abbas, alias Aaron Leir, travelled with him. Whilst their repast was in preparation, their discourse fell upon the town, the surrounding country, and its many natural and architectural beauties. A pause ensued, and Cox looked at his watch. "They are very long with the salmon," said Cox.

"How long vill it last," said Aaron, stirring as from a deep study.

"Long! that's as it may be, Aaron," said Cox; "I only hope that it will be able to accommodate two."

"Vot! is dere another?" asked the man with the beard.

"Why, what do you call yourself? I suppose you'll be quite ready for it?" observed the proprietor of the elixir.

"I! my Got!" said Aaron, and for a Jew turned very pale indeed.

"Why, what's the matter—don't you like salmon?"

"Salm—oh—ha!"—and Aaron seemed suddenly illuminated. "Yes—Got help me!—I was thinkin' of de gibbet."

"What! Kemp? Yes; they've soon had him up. An admirable set of irons; and we had a capital view of him. I only hope that Pops—oh!—the dinner." The dinner was served, and silently consumed. "Not an ill-looking fellow," said Cox, returning to the gibbet with his wine.

"Suppose they'd buried him?" asked the superficial Aaron, "vouldn't it be as good as hangin' him in chains?"

"Certainly not," said Cox with his characteristic acuteness. "You see, Aaron, it is a very old custom to hang men in chains, which is one reason of its excellence; the next is, the example it holds out to crime; the next is, the influence it has upon society at large. When a man is buried he's done with; but when he's to be seen at all hours, it makes us familiar with robbery and murder. The boys who by-and-bye will play at pitch and hustle under Kemp, will, I have no doubt, display the great utility of a gibbet."

"It's an ugly sight," said Aaron.

"Very true—very true; but people will get used to it, and by-and-bye think nothing ugly in it;" and by such close, consistent reasoning did Cox speak on the side of the gibbet. "They say Kemp began by robbery—by-the-bye, I had almost forgotten that wicked slut Eleanor. Who'd have thought it? However, as business has called me through the town I can see how Pops is going on, and"—at this moment the landlord entered with the newspaper, and Cox questioning him about the visitors to the town, discovered that Pops and Cheek had but a short time since quitted the Blue Lion for the Mayor. Cox was a man of decision, and rising from the table, he desired Aaron to follow him. They were about to quit the inn when they met, at the very door-step, the poor orphan protected by Pops. She had followed him from London, having been harshly treated by Josephine, to whom she had had cause to complain. When the poor girl saw Aaron, she uttered a cry, and covering her face with her hands, turned from the door.

"Eleanor!" said Cox, "girl—what brought you here?"—He added sternly, "I wish we hadn't met."

"I—I couldn't stay in London, sir—I—I came to find my father," for so she was wont to call honest little Michael.

"You'll find him if you come with me," said Cox; "I am going to him." The girl, avoiding the glance of the Jew, followed Cox in silence. They soon reached the hall, and were ushered before Mr. Mace, at the moment listening to a pathetic address by Pops, who was counsel for his wife against Miss Boss.

"Father—father," cried the girl, unable to contain herself, and running and embracing him.

"What! Nelly—dear little Nelly," cried Pops, kissing her again and again with a loud smack, in defiance of the mayor, who continued to cry "silence in the court."

"Yes—any body before his own flesh and blood;" said Mrs. Pops, looking down disdainfully on the caresses of Pops, who, however, returned to the defence of his wife, pleading with such pathos, that Mr. Mace called the whole party a pack of fools, and desired them to behave better for the future. The damaged mahogany and broken china were to be settled for in private with the landlord. The party were about to retire, when Mr. Cox—whose sudden appearance had sufficiently surprised his servants present—stood forth and begged that the girl might be detained.

"Eleanor?" asked Pops, with wondering eyes. "What for?"

"For robbery," answered Cox.

"Robbery!" shrieked the girl, and fell as motionless upon the floor, as though a bullet had entered her heart.

"Ellen—Nell—if this be true—no it isn't—and yet—oh, Lord! oh, Lord! if it should"—exclaimed Michael, and he turned a ghastly white, and his teeth chattered.

"She has robbed that gentleman," pointing to Cheek, "in whose service she was employed, of twenty pounds."

"She!" cried the astounded Cheek; "not of a single penny."

"Mr. Cheek, you are not aware that the strong chest has been opened—the money taken out—and, as you here perceive—the thief decamped from London."

"Nelly—Nelly—speak—say it's a lie—tell me—one word—say, a lie—or my heart will break," and tears rolled down the cheeks of Michael. "You hear what they say, Nell?—they call you thief!—Is it true? is it true?"

"No, father—as God looks down upon me, no!" and the poor girl put her hair from her eyes, wiped her tears, and turning her head to meet the glance of Cox, stood silent and erect to hear him.

Cox, though evidently affected by the situation of the girl, and somewhat staggered by the dignity with which she met the charge, stated that, as the

friend of Mr. Cheek, he had some interest in the property—that Aaron, his servant, had given the alarm of the theft, the box being found on the premises cleared of its contents—that Eleanor alone had access to it—and that before the robbery was discovered, she had secretly quitted London, and had been apprehended as a fugitive only a few minutes since. Mrs. Pops, when called upon for her evidence, stated that Eleanor had returned home one evening apparently in great agitation—that the same evening she had left the house, and that she had heard no more of her until the present meeting; she herself being induced to quit London in consequence of the "scandalous business" between her husband and her ungrateful pupil. Poor Eleanor heard all this with the face of death; but when Aaron was required to give his testimony, sobbing violently, she fell upon the neck of Michael. The Jew gave his evidence, never halting for a word; swore to his finding open the empty chest, and to his immediate communication of the fact to Mr. Cox.

"And now, my little girl," said Mace, softened by her piteous wailing—"Now, my little girl, what have you to say?"

"Oh, Lord! oh, Lord!" ejaculated Michael. "Now, Nelly—dear Nelly!"

"I am innocent, sir," said Eleanor; "if I do

not speak the truth, may I fall dead before you."

"But why—why," asked the mayor, "did you quit London?"

Eleanor turned to answer. She was about to speak, when her eye met the eye of Aaron; her throat and face were dyed scarlet, and she exclaimed convulsively, her clenched hands directed towards the Jew, "*He* knows—*he* knows!"

Aaron meekly answered that he knew nothing—he had told all, upon his conscience; and sorry he was to be obliged to do it, but he had told all.

"Then you positively charge this young creature with theft; you would have me send her to gaol?"

Eleanor clung to Michael, stifling her sobs; the tears poured down Michael's face; Mrs. Pops became softened—Miss Boss wept—the iron-master's eyes twinkled—and Cheek tried to cough down his rising emotion.

"What am I to do?" exclaimed the tearful mayor, in great perplexity, his sympathies fighting hard for the accused.

"There's some mistake—there must be some mistake," cried Pops. "Only let me get to London—give me time, your worship, for the sake of my poor Neliy: an orphan, sir,—a poor orphan—a thing without a friend in the world except myself—a creature full of goodness—a helpless lamb, left in this hard world to—to——time, sir for the love

of God, sir, time!" and Michael hugged the girl in his arms; and Josephine embraced her too, and cried outright.

"If the charge is persisted in," said Mace, "I have but one course; however, we will have another examination to-morrow."

"And Nelly—you wouldn't put her in a gaol till ——I tell you, sir, you'd kill the dear child," cried Michael.

"What security can I have that she"——

"I'll be bound in all my farm for her," said a fine young yeoman present—"I will, indeed, Mr. Mayor; for I'm sure she's as innocent as any nestling."

"Well—I—Gullet, let your sister take care of her for to-night. Mind, I hold you answerable for her appearance to morrow. I am afraid I'm straining a little—but really she is so young; and if looks be any thing—I——well, mind you're answerable," said Mace to the constable.

"I tell you, I'll be answerable, Mr. Mayor, to the last penny I have. Poor thing! there's black work somewhere," said the young farmer.

"There is—there is," cried Michael; "God bless you, sir, for your good thoughts of my poor Nelly. There now, Joe"—and Pops addressed his wife—"go with her—comfort her—talk to her, and I'll see you by-and-bye." Eleanor was accompanied to the constable's house by Mrs. Pops; Cox

retired with Aaron to his inn, informing Cheek and Michael that he wished to give them audience there; and the iron-master offered Miss Boss his arm to the street.

CHAPTER XI.

"Mr. Pops, pray, stay a minute—and, Sandford," and the mayor addressed himself to the young farmer, "don't you go. The girl, it seems, is not your daughter?" said Mace, earnestly addressing Michael.

"Poor heart! no," said Pops; "but I don't know if she isn't sometimes dearer to me. Well, well; some of us are sent roughly enough into this world, and roughly enough some of us are handled."

"You knew the parents of the girl?" said the farmer.

"I knew her father, poor fellow! You see, it was all on a matter of business, and I—but it is rather a secret. Poor heart! she couldn't help it, and I've never let her know who was her father."

"And why not?" asked Mace.

"Because, sir, I think it would kill her. I'm sure she's such a gentle, high-minded thing, that she'd pine and waste away with the knowledge—

she'd feel the shame in her blood, though not a heart in the world beats with better."

"Pray tell us, sir," said Sandford, "from whence she comes? I pledge my secresy; and my friend, Mr. Mayor, can be as close as the grave. Who is she?"

"About thirteen years ago," answered Pops "I was sent to a man condemned to die. He had done that which perhaps deserves death; though, for my part, I think death for him who dies, hardly a punishment at all. What is it to be snugly put to bed out of all the trouble about us? No, sir; the punishment is upon the poor souls who stand broken-hearted at the grave, not upon him sleeping soundly at the bottom."

"But the girl—Eleanor?" asked the farmer.

"I tell you, I went to her father on business. He had been a thriving, they said, an honest man. Well, troubles fell like rain upon him: he was cheated, robbed where he had placed most confidence—he was turned out of house and home—lost his wife—took to loose company—fell from step to step—and, at last, in a night fray, a man was killed. Eleanor's father was"——

"A murderer!" exclaimed Sandford, with irrepressible horror—"the father of that girl a"——

"Even so, sir—I shall never forget the first time I saw him. It was a beautiful summer's night, and

he was seated on a bench in the court yard. There were still the remains of better days in his face. He sat in his frieze jacket and leather cap, with his arms crossed, looking down upon a child—it was Eleanor—seated at his feet. She was about three years old, no more; and so beautiful, so innocent—she looked, I may say, a piece of holiness, ay, a bit of religion new from God. It was an awful thing to see that child in a place for felons. A little angel playing in the furnace! There sat the baby at the feet of its dying father; and there, turning up its blessed little face to the face of the murderer, it struck its toy—a doll given to it by the keeper's wife—against the fetters of its father, and smiled and laughed, and crowed at the ringing music. The sound went into my heart like a sword—I was sick, and reeled again."

"And the wretched man?" said the young farmer, his lips trembling at the picture of the artist.

"He looked down upon the child, and the colour of his face turned with the agony of his soul. For some time his lips moved, but I could hear no voice. At last I heard him say—'Yes, Nelly, yes—they'll hang your father, and you will go to the workhouse—and you will be flung like a weed into the world—and you will grow beautiful as your own blessed mother—and you will be wronged, betrayed—made

a thing of shame—and life will be to you a misery—and you will curse the hour of your birth—and you will curse the father that begot you—and you will lie down in wretchedness and pray for death, and death will not find you. Oh, God! Oh, God! who will protect you?'"

"Poor wretch!" cried Sandford, weeping.

"Well, sir, to shorten the story; that night little Nelly slept with my child. We have had three since then, and if sometimes their share of bread and butter has been less because divided among five, I think the little has done them as much good as if it had been more. And Nelly—a thief! oh, Mr. Mayor!"

Mace sat, his eyes swimming in tears. "Well—well," he contrived to speak—"we must see to-morrow," and Pops, broken-hearted, quitted the hall, Sandford walking home with the mayor, resolved to delay his departure from the town until, as he said, "right was done to that poor girl."

Michael bent his way towards the Blue Lion, in obedience to the commands of Cox, to whom, after some talk, he privately showed the result of his mission in the portrait of Kemp, which he had restored from the injury committed upon it by the vanity of the original. It was of little avail, however, that Cox flattered the cunning of the artist: his professional pride was, for the time, dead;

killed by the sorrow he felt for his dear little Nell. It was remarkable that Leir did not show himself, but retired early to bed, assuring the waiter that the fatigues of the journey, with the anxiety he suffered on account of the girl—"and who could think that such an innocent looking thing could be a thief!"—disposed him for nothing but his bed. Cox, softened by the concern of Michael, bitterly regretted the part he had taken in the business. "However, let the worst come to the worst, Michael," said the man of the elixir, "we can quash the evidence, and so she's sure to be acquitted."

"Acquitted? and in that way! no, sir—no; as you have gone so far, as you have charged her before the whole world—before the world you shall try to prove it—and then, if you fail—the Lord forgive you, Mr. Cox, for your persecution of my poor orphan!" Michael was deaf to the remonstrances of his employer, and quitted the room supperless for his bed.

"You can't sleep in your old apartment to-night, sir," said the chambermaid; and she proceeded to inform Pops, that after the tumult of the morning, new company had arrived, and his room was occupied. "But there was a double-bedded room, where, for one night, he might be accommodated."

Pops was in no humour to contest a point which at ordinary times would have roused his soul of fire; therefore saying nothing, but drawing a heavy sigh, he followed the chambermaid to the double-bedded room. With a dumpish heart, Pops went to bed, where he lay tossing to and fro, worn and sleepless. In this state Cheek visited him, opening the door with extreme caution. He came with words of comfort on his tongue, and a glass of brandy and water in his hand. "Are you awake, Michael?" said Isaac.

"How do you think I could sleep?" said Pops.

"I thought you couldn't, and so I thought I'd bring you something to cheat you into a slumber," and Isaac sat beside the bed, offering the brandy and water.

"This is no time for drinking," said Michael, and he took the glass.

"Right, Michael—it isn't," and Isaac received the empty glass, which he replenished from a bottle providently brought with him. "However, it's no use weeping—I suppose I shall find water in the room?"

"A jug full in the corner," replied Pops, despondingly.

"No, Michael"—and Isaac possessed himself of the water, and "craftily qualified" the alcohol—

"this is no time for drinking. It's a hard thing to suspect a man, but I'm quite certain that that Jew is a monstrous thief."

"As you say, Isaac, it's hard—very hard to have an uncharitable opinion, but as sure as I lie in this bed he's a villain."

"They can't prove any thing against the girl—that's one comfort," said Isaac, and he drank with an air of satisfaction.

"No matter for that—it's a blot upon her," said Michael, and he sighed and drank again.

"As the world goes," cried Isaac, with the bearing of a philosopher, "a blot or two doesn't make us all black. And if—who the devil's that?" asked Cheek, hearing snores proceeding from the other bed.

"Hush!" and Pops raised himself up—"the candle—look!"

Cheek took the candle, and softly crossed the room; looked through the curtains—started back—set the candle down again—took the extinguisher dropt it on the light—sank in the chair by Pops—griped his arm—and whispered, "Aaron, the Jew!"

"Aaron! the girl never told me that."

"Hush! Oh, Michael! now he's asleep, you can't think what a thief he looks."

"Are you sure he's asleep?" asked Pops. "Are

you sure"—again the Jew snored, and began to mutter. "I'd give a penny," said Michael, "for a peep into his brain."

"No doubt it's a show that would be worth the money—though, when all's said, I dare say there's few of us would like to let our neighbour have such a peep."

"It's no use—fight as you vill—I vill have you," —muttered Aaron.

"Silence, Isaac—the devil's talking in him."

"Damn the key—it von't fit," cried the dreamer.

"Do you hear that?" cried Pops, nearly breathless with anxiety. "Oh, good Beelzebub! a little more—only a little!"

"Only twenty pounds—only twenty," and Aaron groaned in his sleep. "Ha! ha! you may cry—who'll believe you?"

"Isaac, do you hear that? Do you hear?" Michael looked about the room—for the moon shone gloriously through the window—and perceived that Isaac was gone. Michael immediately got out of bed, and approached the bed of the Jew, "I'll make him confess, or I'll dig it out of his throat with my nails," mumbled Pops, as he walked on tiptoe towards the sleeper. He flung the curtains apart, and shrunk back at sight of the Jew; his features were so convulsed, and his hands were fixed, like the hands of a drowning man, in the clothes. His

face was bathed in sweat—his tongue worked in his mouth—and his whole body heaved and writhed, as if burning poison were in his veins. The spectacle fixed Michael powerless to the spot: for a moment a touch of compassion visited his heart, and he moved to wake the dreamer from the bed of hell on which he suffered,—and then Michael thought of the poor orphan, and paused.

"Only twenty—vell—she did it—I'll swear she did it"—cried the Jew; and Michael, like a roused tiger, was about to leap upon his breast, when he heard the door open behind him, and looking, saw Isaac and Cox appear. "I'll swear she did it," repeated Aaron, as they entered the room, and Michael and Cox exchanged looks; after a pause, Michael quitted the bed, and joined the listeners. "Have you heard enough?" said he exultingly to Cox.

"And they hanged him for it! And he began with thieving—look—how he swings round to me —no, no—I can't stand it—hark, hark how the irons creak! Hark! hark!"—and the dreamer fought in the bed as if possessed; and then, by degrees, became less violent, and at length, with a long-drawn sigh, awoke. The next instant he uttered a piercing shriek, and leapt up in his bed, and roared like a maniac. "See—he's there—he follows me—his whole face laughs at me! mercy! mercy! I'm de thief! my Got! my Got! mercy!"

The hearers ran to the bed, and found the Jew insensible. He lay like a stone upon the pillow —his teeth set, and his hands clenched. The landlord, for he had been brought to the door by Cheek, turned from the bed in the direction of an opposite table, when he gave a loud scream, and crying, "Kemp! Kemp!" fell upon the floor. The horror of the landlord accounted for the last ravings of the Jew, who, waking, beheld on the table the wax head of Kemp, finished to the life, placed there by the artist before he went to bed, and coming out in terrible reality in the moonlight. The handkerchief which Michael had thrown over it, had been accidentally removed by Isaac in his search for the water-jug. The landlord was taken down stairs; and by the advice of Cox, the door was locked upon the Jew.

Pops would, at that instant, have run to the mayor, but was overruled by the authority of Cox, who insisted that the business should be deferred until the morning. The morning came, and Pops ran to Gullet, the constable, to come and take into custody Aaron the Jew.

"Why, you see," said Gullet, "he's got a little the start of us—for he was seen two hours ago on the top of the —— coach."

The information of Gullet was perfectly true. On coming to himself, Aaron, either smitten by

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compunction, or half conscious of the revealings of the past night, lowered himself from the window, and made his escape. His destined victim—she had repelled his offered villany in a way that left him nothing but the savage hope of destroying her good name—was restored to the arms of Michael, well nigh mad with joy at her deliverance, and wholly wild at the escape of the Jew.

CHAPTER XII.

This shall be a short chapter; but we trust a satisfactory one. "What became of poor Eleanor?" We care not to describe the whole process of the courtship, but certain it is, that in time she became the wife of Richard Sandford, a flourishing farmer. And what, it may be asked, befell Miss Margaretta Boss? (We would fain speak of the ladies first). Did she marry Pig, the iron-master? No; but he died, leaving her a very pretty annuity: nay, more, he dedicated to her his second edition of the *History of the Origin and Progress of Cribbage*, superseding his dedication to the first issue to an officer's widow, and supplanting the widow's portrait as an "illustrious player," with a highly finished engraving of Margaretta. And did the gentle Boss live and die

ungathered? No: she married Isaac Cheek. It will be remembered that on his first interview he was seriously struck by her: he had the bruise for a week. The marriage was a most happy one; because as Michael would say, the courtship began at the proper end. As for Michael, assisted by Sandford, he became the whole and sole possessor of the "property;" and, to the great grief of many historical painters, is now making a rapid fortune as a "man of wax."

MATTHEW CLEAR:

THE MAN WHO "SAW HIS WAY."

CHAPTER I.

"With such an excellent property, too! Ah, sir!"—

And, as the speaker touched upon property, his voice trembled, and into either eye there stole one large tear, we think quite as large as the Narcot diamond.

"Ah, sir! if Mr. Clear had only seen into himself! for with such a property!"—

The truth is, Matthew, though the dimmest owl, had, in his own conceit, the vision of an eagle. The snail that carries its eyes at the end of its horns —Matthew, by the way, died a widower—had not a more projective look. Seeing nothing, he could to his own satisfaction peer into the very essences of things. But presuming with the reflective gentleman above—we shall duly return to him—that Matthew never did descend into himself, shall we not pause ere we wonder at or blame him? Did

you, sir—you who have the good fortune to read us—ever descend into a coal-mine, a tin-mine, or, for you have the look of a traveller, into a salt-mine at Cracow? Surely there must be a sudden suspension of the breath—a rigidity of the fingers clinging to the thing which hurries us from the light of heaven—a dizzying fear of what we go to meet! Yet what is all this—what this sinking below some hundred feet of earth (dear old mother of an ungrateful brood!) to the solemn descent of a man within himself? What is this going through antediluvian strata—layers with the bones of the mammoth and the griffin embedded in them—for, seeing what the earth still produces, we are strong in our belief of a pre-adamite griffin—what is all this in the darkest and most dangerous hour, to the awful sinking into our own soul? There may be green grass flourishing at the very mouth of the mine—flowers blossoming about it—but what, what is below? As we sink are we not astonished at the gloom? See we not incrustations of the meanest things where we thought we hoarded gems? and, arrived at the bottom, where we hoped for a stream of living water, sounds of happy greeting, and a ray of comfortable light, we find no drop to wet our withered lips—we hear the croaking frog or shrieking bat, and—our heart palsied with dread—we grope in darkness, in substantial night?

We care not to pursue the theme, but we simply put it to the reader to consider what would be the revolution of society should it become fashionable for people to sink into themselves? What, should some questionable genius produce a kind of moral diving-bell for the use of families? Fortunately, such an invention is, we believe, impossible; though should it be found otherwise, we have this consolation, that the inventor, sharing the fate of great projectors, would inevitably starve in his triumph; and to support this our belief, we here offer to give any odds against the first seven years' profits of the inventor, compared with the septennial gains of any worker of punch—dancer of French dolls—or exhibiter of the gallantie-show.

Matthew Clear was the sole son of a wise stock-broker. But though he inherited his father's money, he did not come into the paternal sagacity whereof the cash was the golden fruit. It is true, Matthew possessed from nature an inexhaustible fund of conceit, which only wanted good luck to be received and registered as penetration. Falling, as our story will show, upon evil days, men scrupled not to call him a fool, when—had only another card turned up—he had, with the self-same faculties, been dubbed a sage. Such, however, is the fate of mortal man—such the opposite rewards that wait on chance! If your bossom friend beggar himself

by haunting lotteries, chide, moralize, be very indignant—if he draw ten thousand pounds, congratulate, eulogize, embrace him, failing not to hint at the loan of a few hundreds. Luck, mere luck, makes even madness wisdom. Our Matthew was not lucky.

At eight-and-twenty, Matthew having paid the undertaker—that two-faced varlet to the blind goddess—had not, if we except the possession of ten thousand pounds—by the way, a great exception—a single care in the world. Rich, and without relatives, he stood aloof, bright and lonely as a gilt weathercock. For business—direct business, he had no genius. Indeed, such deficiency was in his case proper and to be expected. His father—good, buried man! though let us observe, not only good because buried—had toiled through fifty years of life—had been especially ordained and appointed to make money for an only son, the said only son being on his part expressly begotten for the single purpose of spending it. Surely the naughty fiend laughs when he sees paternal misers hoarding their monies in bags with fifty "mortal gashes" in them.

We know not a more interesting object than an unsuspecting young man, left alone in this world of temptations, with ten thousand pounds. Who would not rather hug secure mendicity? The beggar lies by the road-side, and, like a lizard on a

bank, basks in the sun, a careless vagabond; but where the refuge, where the tranquility for the hapless animal born to civet? To the simple inheritor of thousands, there is open to him only one dreadful way to seeming peace. Soon—very soon, Matthew became certain of this truth, for he was speedily hunted, and at the same time, by two mature spinsters and three experienced widows. Five women! and Matthew, be it remembered, was only eight-and-twenty.

"Most beautiful diamonds!" cried Matthew, as he received a necklace from a thin, long, rather yellowish feminine hand—"most beautiful diamonds!" and he looked at the effulgent bait with his one peculiar look, ever called up when he wished to see his way. Matthew lolled on a couch in the handsome room of a most handsome and particularly respectable boarding-house: near him, at his very fingers'-ends, sat a timid, sallow daughter of Eve. Though the lady looked emphatically thirty-four, sure we are she was but thirty-three. She had not a face to "enchant the world" (indeed, who that valued his night-cap would marry such perdition?) but then she had *such* a mind! In a word, she was a most plain woman, most elaborately accomplished. Yes; Miss Julia Lac possessed the surest, the most lasting beauty:—lips wax pale—skin turns—eyes grow dim, but the mathematics

endure till death. Only boys are taken by pretty simpletons; for our mature part—and Matthew subscribed to our opinion—if ever again we fall in love, give us no angelic semblance—no fragile loveliness looking as though it lived on lilies; but, Cupid! for once be grave, and give to our arms a fine matronly specimen, breathing the camphor of a museum—in fact, a living learned mummy. All the species have *such* minds! Now Julia Lac was one of these—a virgin roll of human papyrus.

Still Matthew sat, and—the necklace hanging across his sinister palm—he still continued to see his way. Would we might paint the thousand objects that floated before him! we must content ourselves with a few women, all of whom, curtseying and bridling, looked wedding-rings at Matthew. Now, one with most significant finger would point to a very respectable freehold, duly parcelled into woodland, stream, and meadow; she and the scene would pass, and enter a second candidate, carrying as a scroll a bank security. A third—a fourth appeared; and Matthew sat intently seeing his way. Rapt, he lightly passed his thumb along the necklace; and, as at the touch of an enchanter, there rose before him a most ravishing prospect. All that India boasts of rich and beautiful beamed upon him. He saw fairy-land, with all the countless wealth of Solomon, and his legendary genii. And there, by

a spell, was transported the lady from his side. There, the queen of that radiant, teeming spot, stood Julia Lac; who, with one hand upon her maiden heart, and the other pointing to her property, said very audibly, at least to Matthew—for love has sometimes long ears—"This and these are thine!" Matthew winked, and when he looked again—miraculous vision!—he saw himself enthroned in highest state upon a white elephant.

We as surethe reader that Matthew saw all, and more, much more than this: yet, in his own niggard, constant phrase, he had only seen his way. Of this truth we could print the strongest certificate, namely, the certificate of Matthew's marriage with Miss Lac,—an event to be dated only three weeks and some days from the time of his day-dream. All his acquaintance called Matthew a happy man; he denied not the imputation, but would droop one eyelid, duck his chin, and would briefly sum up the attractions of Mrs. Clear by more than insinuating that before he committed matrimony he had—seen his way.

Given up to their mounting affections, the intoxicated couple quitted London, winging their way, "linked by a silver hook and eye," to a rustic, myrtle shade, for the honey month. Mrs. Clear, even at the end of the four weeks, with the most flattering susceptibility, assured her husband that

she could dwell there for ever. How loathsome was the town become to her! how poor—how frivolous—how hollow! Why, at least, for another month, should they quit the dear retreat? Matthew's blood glowed—nay, simmered with happiness at such appeals; he was suffused to the very nails with hymeneal satisfaction; but Julia must not forget—there were matters to be settled—she had received no letters about the property—and, for the sake, not only of themselves—and Matthew looked with a gay wickedness into his wife's eyes—for the sake, not only of themselves,—this he repeated, expanding with the tautology—they could not continue to go on there in the dark. Matthew meant they must see their way.

CHAPTER II.

With a thousand silent adieus to Ringdove Nest, did Mrs. Clear resign herself to the chaise; for, as she beautifully said—and we regret that so sweet a sentiment was wholly lost on the post-boy—her heart was held by the very honeysuckles. Arrived in London, the married pair found fervent congratulations subsided into tepid compliments, and were soon abandoned to their own resources. In seven

weeks, the happy couple were become reasonable man and wife, as the following breakfast colloquy will certify:—

"My love" (Matthew *loquitur*), "I thought you had given that filthy bird away?"

Thus spake the husband, as a loud laugh and a nervous exclamation from a great grey parrot split upon the ear of—shall we say—the complaining helpmate?

"My dear," returned the wife, with truly conjugal indifference, "is it my fault if I find Nabob so essential to my happiness?"

Another shrieking laugh from the great grey parrot.

"Happiness!" cried Matthew, as though the wife of his soul had spoken something treasonous to the marriage state. "Happiness!" and Matthew jerked his chair, looking wonder at the audacity of woman.

"Ha! ha! ha!" chuckled the parrot; ha! ha! ha! Hooked him, by ——!"

Perhaps this is the place to give a brief history of Nabob. The bird, when very young, had been presented to Mrs. Clear by a handsome Company's officer, who survived the gift barely a month, being carried off by one of the thousand fevers to be obtained only in perfection in India—all others being spurious. On the lady's passage to England, the

bird attracted the attentions of a boatswain's mate, and Julia being an invalid, Nabob was surrendered to the care of his admirer. John Rogers had a tender heart, and, being a boatswain's mate, a sure hand. Like all sailors, he was born the natural enemy of a shark. Every idle moment would he lay in wait for his foe; and, on such occasions, Nabob was never absent. We have said John Rogers was expert; he was also somewhat vainglorious; for, never did he strike a shark, but he roared and shouted—"Ha! ha! ha! Hooked him, by ——!" What was to be expected of a parrot of any capacity perched on the cathead, continually listening to these notes of conquest? The bird was no dull scholar, and in less than three weeks, to the admiration of the crew, and we must admit, to the passing disquietude of his mistress, the parrot laughed and shouted in the very key of the triumphant angler. It is true, that, in the brief day of courtship, Mrs. Clear resolved to part with Nabob; indeed, twice or thrice, when Matthew pressed his suit, the chuckle and the exclamation of the creature broke somewhat dissonantly on the conference, making Matthew pause, and reddening the cheeks of the fluttering spinster. But in the final interview, when Matthew boldly made the offer, and, breathless, stood waiting life or death—to be anticipated in her reply by the ever-laughing,

ever-shouting bird, passed the temper of the kindest mistress. As an earnest of her future obedience to Matthew, she declared herself content to sacrifice Nabob. Then, the lady was Miss Julia Lac—now, was she Mrs. Matthew Clear.

"Madam, how is it possible? I say, how is it possible—"

A great statesman, in his advice to young ambassadors, counsels them to take snuff: when sticking for a word, or wanting a moment to baffle a query, the box, as he insinuates, gracefully assists the hesitating. Matthew, failing in syllables, and not being a taker of snuff, threw himself upon a muffin. Mrs. Clear could not speak, but, turning her head with extreme dignity from Nabob to her husband, she looked a very thick volume. We say she could not speak; for at the moment she held between her lips a lump of sugar—the sixth—for the epicurean beak of the parrot! Sympathetic reader, imagine a seven weeks' wife staring at you with withering reproof in her eyes, and a lump of sugar held mockingly between her teeth! For Matthew, the vision of a death's-head mumbling a cross bone had not so confounded him.

The breakfast was nearly finished, when the servant appeared with two letters. Being directed to his master, they were handed to his mistress. Mrs. Clear broke a seal. Had she at the same

time broken her heart, she could not have published the damage by a louder shriek. Matthew jumped upright, and ran, or rather slid, to his suffering wife: the poor soul was blue-white with anguish. He was about to fold her in his arms, when, with a subtle power borrowed from grief, she repelled his attention, at the same time depositing him on a distant sofa. Matthew drew his breath, and, though he stared, for once, could not see his way. Mrs. Clear, recovering her self-possession, cried—"wretch!"

The tale must be told. The fatal letter was from a lawyer intrusted with the repair of the wounded affections of one of the ladies to whom Matthew, as a gentleman, was contracted. The lady, being deserted by one man, had no other remedy than an appeal to twelve. Plainly, the action was commenced; and the damages due to the heart of the forsaken were moderately estimated at three thousand pounds. We ask any woman what was left to Mrs. Clear but to exclaim "wretch?" Had Matthew from the first impressed upon his future wife the sacrifices he was ready to venture—had he only hinted to her the possibility of other claimants —she would, we are convinced, have exhibited her magnanimity, and, spite of all, have wedded him. But to be tricked into marrying a man with six or seven hearts bleeding at every pore about him,

what woman of delicacy could placidly endure it? It is our hope that Matthew lived and died a Christian; yet will we not suppress his heterodox aspirations. In the present instance, remembering that—counting his wife as nothing—he was pledged to four women, he was criminal enough to wish himself a Turk. Yes, Constantinople—at least for some seconds—seemed to him a most delightful city.

Left alone, for Mrs. Clear had retired for another handkerchief, Matthew began to calculate all the chances. Damages might be flatteringly heavy; there might, possibly, be more than one action—women were so vindictive! Still, had he not, with every deduction made, married the richest of the five? Were not the Indian possessions of his wife—were not her jewels more than trebly worth the best of any other offer? Matthew smiled in self-affirmation; bobbed his head; rubbed his hands. All things considered, he was fully convinced that he had—seen his way!

"In this sweet mood," as the poet sings, Matthew cast a glance at the second letter, yet unopened. With a slight tremor, he broke the seal; and as he broke it, Mrs. Clear, with vermillion eyes, re-entered. Matthew, unconscious of the presence of his injured, yet attentive wife, read on. In a second, Matthew, his cheeks like lead, exclaimed—

no! we will not sully our paper with so prodigious an oath. The reader, however, must not think it was lost upon Mrs. Clear, for, had the demon of mischief suddenly clawed her husband through the floor, we doubt whether she would have screamed so loudly—whether, clasping her hands and sinking upon the chair, she would have portrayed such eloquent dismay! He who is not melted when a woman screams, is a brute. This is a point of our religion, though, we sigh to say, it made no part of the faith of Matthew; for, as though chiselled out of knotted oak, he approached his astonished wife, and, striking the letter with what old Fuller calls a "dead hand," he puts this unadorned, this naked query, to the partner of his fortune and his bed: "In the name of the devil, ma'am, what is this?"

"Mr. Clear!" said the lady, all her spirits conjured to her eyes by the Satanic exhortation. The tones of man and wife were admirably illustrative of their individual manner. Matthew was loud, vulgar, confident; with a mouth opening like a toll-keeper's pocket. Julia, soft, hesitating, retiring, used her lips as though she wanted full confidence in their conduct, and therefore spoke in guarded fragments. On the present occasion, she ventured to repeat—"Mr. Clear!"

"Look here, ma'am; I am written to for five hundred pounds for a diamond necklace."

"Well, Mr. Clear?"

"Well? Why, I know you showed me a necklace, but—eh?—it can't be?"

"You said the diamonds were very beautiful, and —and I took your judgment."

"Judgment! D—— it, ma'am!" (Mrs. Clear shuddered)—"Weren't they your own?"

Mrs. Clear, curving her neck gracefully as any swan, said "No."

"No! What! not some of your extraordinary diamonds—not some of the family jewels?" roared Matthew, and he looked aghast. Not getting a reply, again he shouted—"Not your own?"

"No."

"Ha! ha! ha! Hooked him, by ——!" was the unpremeditated, and untimely proclamation of the artless parrot.

Matthew, seizing a knife, glared with the eyes of a butcher at the bird, which, as conscious of the murderous intent, flew to the extended arms of its mistress. Matthew stood a moment, then fell, as though stabbed to the heart, into a chair. He waxed white and red—cold and hot—played with his fingers upon the table—vehemently rubbed his calf—twitched his neck-cloth—and then, with an air of settled desperation, ventured to look for further particulars into the face of his wife, at the time

assiduously pressing the seventh lump on the self-denying parrot. Matthew groaned.

Now, Matthew was not a man to groan without good and sufficient reason; for though few moments had elapsed since the eloquent burst of Nabob, yet had Matthew, struck by the omen, reviewed a thousand circumstances, solved a dozen riddles, tallied fact with fact, questioned, answered, compared, deduced.—What he had lost, with what he had not won, came in terrible contrast upon him; and, assured that he had not—seen his way, he groaned! But, it may be urged against him—to grudge a necklace to a wealthy bride, to a woman dowered with almost an Indian province, was the imbecility of a miser. Very true; yet, by some subtle association, the necklace was to Matthew a connecting link with all the Oriental possessions of his spouse; that gone, he was superstitious enough to give up every thing for lost. In such despair—and though man and wife are but one flesh—he viewed his unoffending partner with the eye of a cannibal; and really, no woman less deserved such a look.

"Five hundred pounds for diamonds for *that* neck!" and Matthew ground every syllable with his teeth—"Ugh! I'd sooner lay out the money in blisters."

Mrs. Clear started up. For an instant the china seemed in peril; but there are insults that "do lie too deep" for porcelain. Mrs. Clear merely did what all women of sensibility always should, inasmuch as they always can, do—she burst into tears.

Matthew was left alone with the parrot. Nabob evidently felt the delicacy of his situation; for cocking his head, leering his eye, and working his black tongue, he edged himself sidelong from the extended fingers of Matthew, like a vulture, seeking to truss him. Securing the door, that he might the more surely effect his sinister design, Matthew stealthily pursued Nabob, who hopped from chair to sofa—from sofa to table—from table to fire-screen, evading his follower, until, enveloped in a shawl of his mistress, flung over him with gladiatorial precision by his master, he was soon panting in the hands of the destroyer. Certain we are, that Nabob had resigned himself to sudden death; at his neck he already felt the merciless thumb and finger. "Not body's death but body's banishment," determined the clement Matthew; and, lifting up the window, he delivered himself of a most pestilent remembrancer. Ere Matthew was well ensconced in his dressing-room, Nabob, from the summit of a neighbour's chimney, was contemplating a trial flight to the Surrey hills.

CHAPTER III.

When a man is not to be convinced by an earthquake, what argument can successfully be applied to him? Vain was it that Mrs. Clear assured her enquiring mate that the late terrible convulsion (it was very minutely described in all the journals) had swallowed up every rupee of her Indian property, leaving her nothing in the world save a lively trust in the affections of a husband. Matthew remained a sceptic; for, though his wife discovered the greatest anxiety on every new arrival, expressing a hope that "something might be saved," Matthew would grin incredulously, asking her if her memory would serve to make an inventory of her losses? As the earthquake had proved such a timely friend, it had doubtless not taken all? These sneers he would urge with unrelenting assiduity; but Mrs. Clear—high-minded woman!—disdained to reply to the insinuations. Calmly, and with touching resignation, she would, on such occasions, raise her eyes to heaven, and ask, "What sins she had committed to be married to an atheist?"

All this time Miss Camilla Brown—such was the name of the injured plaintiff—slept not on her

wrongs. It is true that, mollified by Mr. Downy, the pacific solicitor of Matthew, the lady entertained certain hints at a compromise. Downy had a heart of honey, and a tongue of silver; a gentle, persuasive, excellent little man, with a real friendship for his client, whom he had known from a boy.

"Ha!" Matthew was wont to soliloquize, "had I not kept my marriage secret from Downy, he had enquired for deeds, and then—and then"—and then, we can take it upon ourselves to affirm, Miss Lac had still remained an unplucked bud.

"Well, Mat," said Downy, at his last conference, "Iv'e made the best of bad. I—where's your wife?"

"Gone to Dorking," replied Matthew, impatient of the superfluous query.

"Dorking again! But I come on business. I've offered the plaintiff five hundred pounds, and I think she'll listen to reason."

"No doubt," said Matthew, drily, "'tis a good round sum for the trouble."

"I tell you, Mat," urged Downy, in a soft yet impressive tone, "if she goes into court with those letters, you're not safe for a thousand."

"If I had but seen my way, I had never written," said Clear with unnecessary emphasis. "That a man should lift a pen against himself! 'Tis a sort

of suicide," moralized the defendant. "Five hundred pounds! Well, if I must, I must."—Downy nodded satisfaction.—"But if ever I have a son!"—

Downy turned his grey eye on Matthew; then, looking upwards, stared at the portrait of Mrs. Clear. Matthew felt the look to be cruelly murderous; for it slew the unborn. From that hour, Matthew never had the hardihood to enjoy even a probable son.

"I suppose," said Downy, "you have heard that Mrs. Melon, and"—

"Another action?" asked the conscience-stricken Matthew.

"No, she's married—so you're safe from her. But your young widow, Mrs. Undercrust"—(Matthew gasped)—"Ha! that was a miss, indeed!"

"Phew! She hadn't a penny certain."

"No; but now her uncle's dead,"

"Dead! D—— it," said Matthew, and he looked ready to weep, "now she must be very comfortable."

"They say, fifteen thousand," remarked Downy, who unconsciously again glanced at the portrait of Mrs. Clear; then recollected himself—took up his hat—gave a silent squeeze to her husband, and left him to the sharp reproach of broken protestations.

One morning, some weeks after the visit of Downy, Matthew sat in his easy chair, exhibiting a most perturbed and anxious countenance. Mrs.

Clear was from home; by the way, she was gone to Dorking. From his looks, it was certain that Matthew could not see his way. He took up a book—he threw it down—he paced the room—he stared into the street. At length, he went out. Having wandered in St. James's Park a couple of hours, he returned home. After the lapse of two more hours, the servant announced—

"Mr. Felix!"

Matthew jumped up to meet the visitor, but immediately sank again into his chair. Truth to say, ill luck never had a more significant retainer than Mr. Felix. He looked with a dead black eye on Matthew—shook a sharp, white face—elevated his shoulders, and said, or rather croaked, "Mr. Clear, I am very, very sorry"—

"Lost? lost?" asked Matthew, suffocated with anxiety.

We may here inform the reader that Mr. Felix was formerly head-clerk to Mr. Downy; and that his present object was to inform Matthew of the verdict—not ten minutes returned by a conscientious jury, in the case of Brown *versus* Clear. The reader will remember that we spoke of a compromise. Certain it is, that the plaintiff, won by Downy, had consented to take five hundred pounds with costs: the money was to be paid the next day, when Mr. Felix, who had recently set up for him-

self, assured Matthew that if brought into court, the plaintiff, left to *his* adroitness, would not get a sixpence. To this he pledged even his reputation. Matthew—seeing his way—broke with his old friend Downy, and gave the case to Mr. Felix, who again and again, in his own graphic and anatomical phrase declared that "Miss Brown had not a leg to stand upon!"

"These things *will* happen," said the comforting Mr. Felix; "the damages"—

Matthew, in a state of strangulation, gasped—"How much?"

"One thousand five hundred pounds!"

The features of Matthew changed like a dying dolphin—"One thousand, five—why—you told me, —yes, you swore, she hadn't a leg to stand upon."

"As a lawyer, sir, I was justified in the assumption; but after what had passed between you and Miss Brown, you, sir, must have known better."

"Passed—between—us?"

"Oh, Mr. Clear! a case of rock couldn't stand against *them* letters. Not a dry eye in court; even his lordship moved; and three times the counsel stopt to recover himself! Seven ladies fainting, and three in strong hysterics, taken from the gallery. How could you write *them* letters?"

With this interrogative, and a passing complaint of great exhaustion, Mr. Felix departed to dine.

Though we anticipate the event a few weeks, we will here state, as an evidence of the mighty power of love,—making the lion to lie down with the lamb, —that such was its influence over Mr. Felix, that though opposed to Miss Brown, he subsequently married the lady, wisely adding his own bill of costs to her private damages.

To return to Matthew, who sat staring and stunned. The unequivocal triumph of his epistolary talents, weighed with him not a feather against fifteen hundred pounds. At length, Matthew began to vociferate. "Fool! fool! And when I thought I saw my way! Fifteen hundred! fifteen! and then the costs! Oh Lord! In all, two thousand pounds! Two thousand! How Downy will triumph! how he'll chuckle! how he'll exclaim"——

"Ha! ha! ha! Hooked him, by ——!"

Matthew stood transfixed. Was it "but a wandering voice," or was it, indeed, Nabob in the flesh? Another laugh dispelled all doubt; Matthew, opening the door of an inner room, beheld the bird of evil omen—beheld—

"Tippoo, my dear, where's your bow?"

Thus spake Mrs. Clear to a fat little boy of about eight years old, with glittering dark eyes, coal coloured hair, and a primrose complexion. The docile infant drew up to Matthew, greeting him

with a truly oriental salutation. Matthew, without the slightest return of the elaborate civility, glared at his wife. Mrs. Clear, with an amiable attempt at conversation, taking off her bonnet, observed, "she had been to Dorking." This she said in a tone of explanation to the bewildered look of her husband, who, however, was far from satisfied with the intelligence. "He knew—she was always going to Dorking—but—who—who the devil was Tippoo?" His wife, with a confidence peculiar to herself, explained.

"A burden had long weighed upon her heart; she could no longer live beneath the pressure. Tippoo was a helpless orphan. She had long known his unhappy parents; she might almost say his mother and herself, bred together, were one. In his last moments, she had promised the father to nourish and protect the little Tippoo. She had brought the dear infant to England—had placed him with a nurse at Dorking. But for the visitation of Providence, which had swept away her property (true, as a Christian, she ought not to murmur), out of her own means, she would have reared and educated the little love; but since the earthquake"—Here, a torrent of tears rendered the speaker inaudible.

Though the presence of Tippoo was thus satisfactorily explained, the sudden advent of Nabob

still remained a mystery. There never was so lucky an accident! Tippoo during his residence at Dorking, much frequented the society of certain mercenary naturalists abounding in that neighbourhood; we speak of bird-catchers. On the morning of the day of Mrs. Clear's last visit, Nabob, keeping company with rustic linnets and plebeian sparrows, was caught in a net with a dozen of his low friends, and immediately recognised and claimed by the delighted Tippoo. A guinea rewarded the bird-catcher: and thus, Mrs. Clear in one day repossessed herself of all (except her husband) she held dear in the world,—Tippoo the orphan, and Nabob the parrot.

Mrs. Clear had heard of the verdict; and though considerably shocked at the sum, besides being much hurt at the warm, libertine tone of the letters, her conduct on the occasion was all but angelic. Matthew expected bitter reproof—scorching glances. Alas! he knew not woman. He knew not her deep tides of feeling—the secret sources of her sympathy; Mrs. Clear breathed nought but comfort and content: perhaps, the genial season had its influence: it was a lovely July night, and Matthew was melted.

"Indeed, it was a heavy sum; but a cheerful economy would soon replace it. And, after all, what an escape! For what," exclaimed Mrs.

Clear, with ill-suppressed horror, "what, my dear Matthew, if you had married such a person?" Mrs. Clear evidently waited for a reply; but Mr. Clear said nothing.

At this moment, the domestic group might have kindled a Wilkie. Matthew was seated on a sofa, one hand beside him, the other thrust beneath his waistcoat. On his immediate right sat his wife in a novel position. She had both arms about her husband's neck, with her eyes following his eyes. On Matthew's left knee, after much unseen assistance on the part of Julia, sat little Tippoo, all his faculties absorbed by a large scarlet apple. At an end of the sofa was perched Nabob, silently devouring buttered toast, a vegetable he had much missed in the fields of Surrey. Now, confess, reader—have you not here a picture?

"Is he not a sweet fellow?" asked Mrs. Clear, turning her husband's head to Tippoo. "And then so mild—so tractable! Yes, Matthew, he will—he must win upon you; you will find in the dear child a son,—(some association made Matthew cast up his glassy eyes to the portrait)—"an affectionate son; and, yes, you will be to him as a loving father?" Matthew sat with his tongue like a stone in his mouth. "Eh, Matthew?" and Mrs. Clear continued with every query to tighten her arms about her husband's neck. "Eh, Matthew?" At length,

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MATHEW CLEAR NOT "SEEING HIS WAY."

in self-defence, for a blue tinge stole upon the good man's cheek, Matthew uttered a sound which with Julia passed for "yes."

"I knew you would; and you will foster him, and educate him as a gentleman, and provide for his future wants in this stormy, wicked life—eh, Matthew?"—and Julia's arms were still at Matthew's neck. "Eh, Matthew? I say, eh, Matthew?" and Mrs. Clear raised her voice with every question, squeezing, too, with growing force.—"Eh, Matthew?"

This time, Matthew becoming decidedly purple, cried loudly—"Yes, yes!"

"Ha! ha! ha! hooked him, by ——!"—and the parrot finished his buttered toast.

CHAPTER IV.

The expenses of the law-suit, various debts contracted by Mrs. Clear, when she walked "in maiden meditation, fancy free," together with the professional education of Tippoo, in a few years reduced Matthew's ten thousand pounds to little less than four. Unhappily, Mrs. Clear, for all her solitary hint at cheerful saving, had not learned "to sink with dignity." Until awakened by the ring of the

last guinea, she lived in the delusion of the unbroken ten thousand. It is true, her imagination was tinged with oriental extravagance; much was to be allowed for her breeding; though Matthew, we grieve to say, was quite devoid of the necessary charity. Nay, sorry are we to add, that as he lost his money, he lost his temper; as he became poor, he became less endurable. Indeed, so surely did his manners fall with his purse, that when suddenly deprived of every shilling, he appeared—aye, even to many of his protesting friends—an incorrigible monster. Poor fellow! he was hardly used; for he was one of those rigid people who, with ten thousand pounds, pay their way, praise honesty as the best policy, and look on the gazette as part and parcel of the Newgate Calendar. Pity, that such folks should feel adversity,—that such excellent principles should be weakened, broken, by evil fortune! However, so it chanced with Matthew: he, who with a plum would have been a miracle of stoical probity, lightened of the best part of his wealth, began to look with gentler eyes on human indiscretion. Matthew, rich and prosperous, would have called that gross iniquity, which the same losing Matthew practised as wise self-preservation.

"Very well, Mr. Clear, very well; you know best; but sure am I that Simpson's a villain." Thus, with feminine foresight, one day prophesied

Mrs. Clear. Matthew, seeing his way, smiled contemptuously; and though he spoke not, he felt, to his own satisfaction, more than a match for Simpson. Had he condescended to reply, he might, we think, have ventured a like ingenuous vaunt to that really proclaimed by a modern master of the revels.—"Beware, sir, beware of that Mr. Bradford," whispered the friendly warning. "Sir," replied the mirror of managers, with an air and look of questioned genius,—"Sir, Mr. Bradford may think himself a b——d rogue; but, sir," and the speaker towered and dilated with a consciousness of power, as he coined the expressive comparative,—"but, sir, he shall find that *I* can be a b——d-*er!*"

"Ha! what? Simpson—why, the very man in my thoughts," said Matthew; "well—humph! sit down." But Matthew, despite his hospitable address, looked ill at ease. His eye fell from the face of Simpson, and now, wandered, quite unconsciously, to Mrs. Clear's portrait; and now, dwelt sleepily upon the carpet. Julia rose from her seat; and, uttering half a dozen eloquent footsteps, quitted the room; we say eloquent, for even the dull, the guileless Simpson, understood the disdain conveyed in them.

Matthew sat, as though his chair became every moment hotter and hotter; and his face, glowing

from a dirty yellow into a dingy red, betrayed the increasing heat. On the other hand, Simpson showed a countenance of stone. Observing the confusion of his friend, he, with exemplary politeness, silently awaited his convenience. Preluding the act by a short cough, Matthew jerked his chair, took the hand of Simpson, and squeezing it with the fervour of a Pythias, said or sighed—"My dear Simpson, I am so sorry,"—

"Not a word—not a syllable, my dear friend. Since you can't oblige me with the thousand"—

"Between ourselves, my dear boy, the extravagance of Mrs. Clear is—but no, not even to you should I—can I—expose my own wife. I thought I had the money—I"—

"I wish you had, with all my soul! But, at once to put you out of agony, I am come to tell you, that I don't want it."

If, before, Matthew warmly pressed the hand of his friend, he could at this moment have embraced him. Yes, no sooner had Simpson declared his independence, than Matthew became perfectly tranquil.

"Indeed," added Simpson, after a brief pause, "'twas very lucky that we didn't purchase"—

"Lucky!" cried Matthew, and his jaw worked like the jaw of a corpse galvanized;—"lucky!"

"Very lucky; for, you must know,"—and here

Simpson lowered his voice, took out his box, and impartially showering the snuff up either nostril, continued with syllabic distinctness,—"you must know, that the bonds we were to buy together, have to-day gone down to nothing." So saying, Simpson vanished from the room, leaving Matthew fixed in a chair, an exanimate pauper.

A few words will tell the rise and progress of this domestic tragedy. Simpson and Matthew were bosom—nay, as Simpson thought, pocket-friends. Thus, when Simpson, speaking on the best secret information, assured Matthew that a timely purchase of certain bonds must inevitably "lead to fortune," and consequently to fame,—at the same time, asking for the golden intelligence, the temporary loan of a thousand to participate in the venture —Matthew, in a rapture of gratitude, and with a religious exclamation, promised the cash. However, Matthew was no sooner left alone, than he began to see his way. Why should he pay so dearly for mere advice? Why should not he himself reap the harvest of his own thousand? The tempter of man triumphed over friendship; for, incited by the devil, Matthew invested every shilling of his fortune in the aforesaid securities, wholly unmindful of the thousand pounds sacredly pledged to the believing Simpson! Thus, seeing his way, Matthew looked upon stark beggary. We think Simpson

had an inkling of the sudden destitution of his friend: we believe it, from the calm, cold manner with which he touched upon the fall of the bonds, —from the spark of malice that lighted his dull eye as he glided from the apartment. We may wrong him,—but we have our suspicions.

What was left to Matthew? In no man was the love of country more deeply rooted; and yet, on the shortest notice was he prepared to wean himself from England—to cross the sea—to become an alien and a wanderer. Yes; without breathing a word about the vision, he clearly saw his way to New York. It may prove the worth of Matthew, when we assure our readers that many, many in London inquired most earnestly of his prospects. Matthew employed, as he conceived, the surest means to baffle such amiable curiosity. Indeed, believing himself unequal to the pang, he even took no formal leave of his wife; but promised himself, when he should have seen his way across the Atlantic, to—to send for her. Fortunately, the day he withdrew himself from his home, Mrs. Clear was gone with a party to the London Docks. He had merely told her, that for a few days he should be absent in the country.

It was about a fortnight after this separation, that the fast-sailing ship, "The Good Intent," lay off Spithead: all was prepared; in a few minutes

she would put out to sea. A boat approached the ship, containing a passenger, a Mr. Bustard, whose berth had been duly selected and paid for by a friend in the London Docks. The voyager mounted the side; but, no sooner was he upon deck, than a shriek—a piercing female screech went through the very timbers of the "The Good Intent." The men paused motionless at the ropes; the passengers stared, transfixed; but what was the surprise of the males—what the indignation of the ladies,—when a woman rushed to the new-comer, fell "like a guilty thing" at his feet, and with clasped hands, running eyes, and cracking voice, exclaimed—

"Forgive me, Matthew!—pray, forgive me! I don't deserve that you should have followed me! Indeed, I don't! But, forgive me, my only Clear —and I will—I will go back with you!"

Reader, it was even so. Peter Bustard, cabin passenger, was no other than the defaulter, Matthew Clear. And most unluckily, two individuals—their boat lay astern—expressly commissioned to search "The Good Intent" or any other vessel, for the fugitive,—convinced by the words of Julia that they had caught their prey, instantly pounced upon it, and having satisfied Captain Rogers of the legality of the act, proceeded to carry Matthew and his luggage into their private bark. Indeed, Captain Rogers, though evidently interested in the fate of

Matthew, was too wise an officer—too good a seaman—to question lawful authority. Otherwise, he had never risen from the rank of a boatswain's mate to the command of his present ship: for, by the strangest accident in life, Mrs. Clear, when a spinster, had sailed to England with the very Rogers, in whose "Good Intent" she was now a favoured passenger.

Matthew was hurried into the boat; his wife, breathless with anxiety, watched him safely seated between the officers. Of course, she expected an invitation to join the party; but Matthew deigned no look, no word to the forsaken. Her magnanimity at the spousal neglect was truly beautiful. She descended to the cabin with the dignity of an injured empress; and from the stern window, with a bottle of hartshorn at her nose, contemplated the "lessening boat;" and though, at least with Matthew, it "unwilling rowed to land,"—Julia, above the weakness of silly Susan, neither "cried adieu," nor "waved her lily hand."

For two or three minutes a deep silence reigned throughout the ship; and the very sea, the breeze, seemed hushed in sympathy with the silent sorrow, the wrongs of Matthew. All, save the oars, was profoundly at rest, when a high, shrill note came over the waters from "The Good Intent,"—a sound driven "like a sword of fire" into the ears of Mat-

thew—a voice that cried through the serene air—across the glassy wave—

"Ha! ha! ha! Hooked him, by ——!"

It was not to be supposed that Mrs. Clear could cross the Atlantic without Nabob. Like the sweet little cherub, the parrot was aloft, perched on a rope of "The Good Intent."

CHAPTER V.

Law and private malice did their worst; and Matthew grew old, and lived a beggar. It is true, in the fondness of his heart he would continue to see his way; but then he looked through rags, and the world had lost its glory. He was open to any offer; but fortune only sneered at his readiness. In the humility of his soul he thought nothing on this dirty earth too foul to touch; and yet he walked with empty hands. Alone in the world—for he possessed certain evidence of the demise of Mrs. Clear at Philadelphia—he had little to live for, but found it difficult to live. Often, seeing his way, he looked directly at the poor-house. And what added scorpions to his daily wants, was the prosperity of early acquaintances—of men with no more eyes than moles; men, who in truth had never seen

their way, and who, notwithstanding, had jogged dully and prosperously on. Harassed, disgusted, weary of breath, Matthew paused in a desolate hour at a book-stall; and, thumbing over a volume of Plutarch, nerved by heroic examples, he resolved on "self-slaughter."

Reader, pause ere you execrate. Behold Matthew, with but one sixpence—and that begged from an old acquaintance—in his pocket; houseless—hopeless; his coat in tatters; a ventilating rent in his breeches; melancholy eating his heart; a November sky—a November rain; and a hole in either shoe! Is not this an hour in which a man could lie down in a coffin as in a bed? In which he could gather himself to sleep—wrap even a parish shroud about him as he would wrap a warm great-coat—compose his arms upon his breast, and then fall smiling off into death—smiling, at the running, scraping, stamping, shuffling, still to continue over his head, by the lackeys, the flatterers, the debaters, the jugglers of the world above? Yes! Matthew saw his way into a grave, and looking back at what he should leave, the wormy pit seemed to him a warm, comfortable couch; eider-down at the bottom, and silken curtains at the sides!

Matthew, pondering on the means, decided in favour of arsenic. Composing himself to a look of

indifference, he entered the splendid shop of a "surgeon and apothecary." Having, like Romeo, to call about him, he had some seconds to observe the gorgeous show made by the man of drugs.—At length, the apothecary appeared behind the counter. "What may you want?"—

Matthew paused, and a tremor thrilled him from crown to sole. "What may you want?"—

"A—a—a dose of salts," answered Matthew. The salts were delivered, the money paid, and Matthew was again in the street. The reader may marvel at the vacillation of the self-doomed, who, seeking deadly poison, asks for a salutary aperient. We know not whether we can satisfactorily solve the riddle; but this we know, that Matthew, casting up his eyes, beheld in the prosperous surgeon and apothecary, the helpless, and, as he afterwards turned out, the ungrateful, arrogant Tippoo; the boy, whom—held to his pledge by Mrs. Clear—Matthew had "fostered, and educated as a gentleman, and provided for in this stormy, wicked life." Meeting his looks, Matthew thought he was recognised; and whether—for pride is a mysterious agent—he would not suffer Tippoo to suspect that his foster-father was so abased that nought was left him but to die, or whether Matthew had really repented of his wickedness, we cannot decide. We can only assure the reader that, eschewing poison,

he asked for salts; and, the medicine in his possession, he was too good an economist to fling it away. No, he took it; and, strange to relate, in four-and-twenty hours, he saw his way with very different eyes. From this accident, we venture to suggest to every morbid genius, to every despairing lover, who determines to purchase arsenic, first to try a dose of salts. Aperients are fatal to romance.

Matthew drudged and drudged, and sank and sank. He, who, on the outset of life, saw his way over its proudest heights, its richest plains, now, with contracted vision, hung over the books of a sordid master, a withered usurer. However, as the man of money-bags was much older than Matthew, as he had no kindred, and was bountiful in his professions towards his sole, his confidential, and his half-starved clerk, Matthew, in bright moments, would see his way to the miser's fortune. Hence, was he all devotion and ductility. Thus, when his master testified to an event, it was enough for Matthew: though he himself should have forgotten the circumstance, yet was his confidence so great in the veracity of his employer, that he had but little hesitation in swearing to it. A law-suit most triumphantly illustrated the fidelity of Matthew.

A certain spendthrift deeply indebted to the advances of the money-merchant, had the dishonourable audacity to contest the claims of the lender.

The suit was involved in many niceties; and what was worse, it fell at a time when Matthew's master was in the hands of the physician, who, to the anxious inquiries of the clerk, shook a death's-head! The pain of the sick man's disease only aggravated his desire of vengeance. To Matthew he left the evidence of the case, narrating various incidents which, described on what Matthew believed to be a bed of death, had to him all the force and solemnity of an oath. Matthew swore in open court in the spirit of his master; but vain was the testimony; the spendthrift gained the cause; and the sudden shock finished the usurer. He died, leaving every thing he had to build a chapel, bequeathing not even a blessing to his clerk. Hapless Matthew! It was not enough for the defendant to gain a victory, but he must persecute the conquered. An indictment was filed against the clerk for perjury. He was tried, found guilty, and sentenced; and for only swearing in the spirit of his master, Matthew was condemned to pass two years in Newgate, and to stand one hour by St. Sepulchre's clock in the pillory!

Poor Matthew! we saw him fixed and turning; and we must say to his credit, that he went round and round with the calmness and equanimity of the most practised statesman. We have long yearned to hold a philosophical discourse on the pillory: is

not the present a golden time? We pledge ourselves that our essay shall employ one hour, and no more? Well, we do a violence to our feelings, and defer our task.

All was breathless, hushed, in the Old Bailey, as Matthew was presented to the mob. The executioner acquitted himself with praiseworthy adroitness. In an instant Matthew was ready for the sport; and still the silence reigned, as he stood, prepared for the first turn.

"Ha! ha! ha! Hooked him, by ——!" rang from a window of the Governor's mansion. Yes, there was the ubiquitous Nabob! He had been brought to Newgate by a sailor, subsequently doomed to the hulks; had been trafficked with a turnkey's wife for tobacco, and, after various prison vicissitudes, was promoted to the drawing-room of the Governor.

Nothing could exceed the humanity of the crowd. Two or three—at our commencement we particularized one speaker—moralized on the condition of the culprit; but, with a single exception, no spectator offered an affront. Having turned his hour,* Matthew was about to be released.

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* Ere this passes from the press, the pillory may be abolished —gone for ever with many other "venerable and excellent institutions."

"How are you now?" soothingly inquired the executioner.

"Pretty well—pretty well—if"—

"At this moment, a dastard in the human form flung a handful of mire in the eyes of the sufferer; who, trying to shake it off, merely added:—

"If—if—I—could—see—my—way!"

A kind Samaritan attended Matthew in the prison. He sought to clear the eyes of the sufferer of certain particles. "Look straight forward," said the operator.

"Ha!" groaned Matthew, and he thought—"*If* I had always looked straight forward, how differently should I have seen my way!"

BARNABY PALMS:

THE MAN WHO "FELT HIS WAY."

CHAPTER I.

That philosopher was an ass, who, trembling at the peril inherited with his eyes, resolved to avoid all mischief by putting them out. We know, that in this narrow, gloomy passage, called the world, eyes are, so to speak, edged tools, hurting the wearer. We know that, deceived by them, we often shake and wonder at a stalking giant, when, in truth, the Polyphemus is only a swaggering mountebank on wooden stilts,—and doff our caps to a glistering glory, which stripped of its outside, is more loathsome than an ape. On the other hand, how many with a wise tyranny, use their eyes as the meanest vassals, never suffering them to play truant in the summer clouds—to hang on summer flowers—to loose their time with unprofitable exhalations, or to try to spell the mystery of the stars! No; prudently disciplined, the ocular servants help their masters to dress and to undress

—to save them from posts and pillars when abroad —to eat their meat at home—and to take especial care that no shilling be a counterfeit. Now, Barnaby never thought of trusting his eyes but with the lowest duties, instinctively keeping them from all delicate embarrasments. In the petty, menial wants of life, Barnaby might employ his eyes; in the momentous concerns of this world, he winked, and securely—felt his way.

At the green age of eighteen, Barnaby possessed the ripe fruit of two score. But the truth is, Barnaby had never been a child. In the nurse's arms he was a very mannikin, showing an extraordinary precocity in his choice of the ripest apple and the biggest cake. Left as a legacy to an only uncle, the boy flourished after his "own sweet will," unchecked and unassisted save by the scantily-paid attentions of a well-meaning pedagogue, vegetating in a hamlet some six miles from the Kentish coast. Poor Joshua! he might have learned of his scholar—might have sucked worldly wisdom even from the suckling. We repeat it: at eighteen Barnaby was a match for grey hairs.

Barnaby had a deep respect for his uncle; in fact, so deep, it all but sank to fear. Thus, our hero spared no pains to feel his way to the heart of his relation, who, be it understood, enjoyed the reputation of a wealthy man, albeit, old inhabitants

of the town would sometimes marvel how his wealth had been acquired. Palms, senior, dwelt in a huge dilapidated mansion within gunshot of the sea; his household consisting of an old man and his daughter, a pretty, gay-hearted lass of eighteen.

Old Palms was seated in his oak parlour, steadily employed upon a breakfast, of which beef and Kentish ale, with an incidental drop of white brandy, formed the principal part. Before him sat Barnaby in trim travelling attire. He looked and spoke the creature of humility. Could he have made the transfer, he would have given his soul to his uncle as readily as he advanced the mustard. The truth is, Barnaby was about to enter the world: he had drawn on his boots for the great pilgrimage of life. In a few hours, and he must feel his way through the crowd of London, being destined to the warehouse of Messrs. Noakes and Styles, mercers, City. Hence, the reader may imagine that Barnaby was subdued by the approaching event—that he felt some odd twitchings at the heart, as he stared at the old wainscot, with its every worm-hole familiar to him —that a something rose to his throat, as he looked out upon the sea, tumbling and roaring in concert with a January gale—at that sea which had sung his early lullabies, —that his heart, like the ocean-shell, still responded to the sound. It is reasonable to believe—though

we cannot substantiate the fact—that some such emotions rose in the bosom of the pilgrim. Of this, however, we are certain: Barnaby looked with the eyes of a devotee towards a small leathern bag, lying on the table at the right hand of his uncle and Barnaby continued to gaze at the string securing the neck, until, distracted by the appearance of Patience Mills, who—the more serious portion of the breakfast consumed—entered with a dozen eggs.

Now, Patience had a face as round, and cheeks as red, as any pippin, eyes blue as heaven, and a mouth, as a certain young man on the coast avowed, sweet as a honey-comb. Nevertheless, had Patience been some smoke-dried hag, Barnaby had not visited her with grimmer look. Patience replied to the glance by a giggle, solacing herself, when out of hearing, by muttering "glad he's going." Barnaby looked at his uncle's fingers, and then at the bag. Heedless of the hint, old Palms took an egg.

"Come, eat, Barney; eat. Ye'll have a cold ride to London: the north wind's edged like a scythe. What! not take eggs?"

"Doat on 'em, uncle," cried Barnaby, aroused, like Shylock, from "a dream of money-bags." The fact is, Barnaby had that day determined to like every thing: on that occasion he wished to leave a vivid impression of his meekness and humi-

lity. "Quite a weazel at eggs, uncle," continued Barnaby, and he began to chip the shell. Now, it so happened that Barnaby had fallen upon an egg which, on being opened, emitted conclusive evidence of its antiquity. Old Palms, instantly perceiving the work of time, roared to Barnaby to cast the abomination out of the window. Barnaby, however, determined to give an example of his economy —of his indifference to petty annoyance—sat like a statue, still holding the egg between his thumb and finger—his uncle applying the same instruments to his own nose.

"Out with it, Barney!" Barney smiled a remonstrance, and handled his spoon. "Zounds!" cried old Palms, almost grinning through his disgust at what he deemed the ignorance or simplicity of his nephew—"Zounds! nephew—why—ha! ha!—you'll never eat it?"

Barnaby, mistaking the humour of his uncle, nodded knowingly.

"You will? I tell you 'tis a musty egg—a bad egg—pah! the egg stinks!"

Barney looked as though he believed he had won his uncle's heart for ever, and then complacently made answer, "I don't care for eggs *over fresh*."

Now, we boldly declare the egg of Barnaby to be a grander subject for the moralist and the romance-writer than either the egg of Columbus, the

famous roc's egg of the Eastern Princess, the golden egg of Æsop, or the egg of Mother Goose. Reader, pause a moment, and reflect on the prosperity of whole hordes of people, whose success in life is solely attributable to their participating in the taste of Barnaby.

Look at his lordship, sparkling with honours, padded with bank paper! and know ye to what he owes all this? Oh, doubtless to his high statesmanlike qualities—his profound knowledge—his indefatigable industry. Not so, not so; the simple story is, he was wont to confidentally breakfast with the minister, and on such occasions showed that he "cared not for his eggs over fresh." But shall we stay at courts and courtiers? No; from a palace to a workshop there is ever some ductile eater—some omnivorous, obsequious Barney at breakfast—who has made, or looks to make, a figure in the world by not caring for his eggs "over fresh." Many are the ways in which the tale may be told. There is Tom Spangle, a handsome, healthy, six-foot animal of two-and-thirty. He had not a shilling; now, he rides blood, and writes cheques. Do you know the secret of the change? Very well; he married the ancient, yellow widow of an army-contractor. Ay, even so; he cared not for his egg "over fresh."

The avowed taste of Barnaby was not lost upon

his uncle. The old man looked through the youth with a thinking eye—an eye that seemed to read his moral anatomy—and then uttered a long "hem!" at the same time stretching his hand to the money-bag. Invisible fingers were playing on the heart-strings of Barnaby, whilst, from the corner of his eye, he saw his uncle slowly undo the strip of knotted leather which "compressed the god within." The bag was opened; its glorious contents blazed on the table; and as they rang upon the oak, Barnaby instinctively rose to his feet, standing respectfully uncovered in "the presence."

"Barney," said old Palms, and reverently laid his hand upon the gold, "Barney, my child, you see the little hoard I've set apart for you?" The life-blood of Barnaby tingled in his very eyes, and his ears rang with music. "You see the few savings and scrapings I have made for the child of my brother? For I feared that you, an innocent, unprotected, unassisted lad, would need the aid which money can alone afford. Barney, I trembled for the softness of your heart—the simplicity of your nature." Here Barney felt almost in peril of tears. "Yes, Barney, these were my weak anxieties, my foolish fears." Saying which, the old man began to return the guineas to the bag. During the operation, not a word was spoken. Barney, scarcely venturing to breathe, stood with his head bent on

his breast, and one eye on the table, silent and subdued. The tinkling of the gold—the voice of Barney's fortune, was alone audible; and, as note followed note, the young expectant became possessed as though he listened to angelic trumpets. The bag being filled, Palms proceeded to tie its mouth, talking as he leisurely tied. "Barney, I find my fears were the fears of ignorance. You need not such a sum as this; you are already rich in strength—in wisdom."

"I, uncle?" cried Barnaby, sensitively shrinking from the compliment, and at the same time—struck by the manner of Palms—breaking into a profuse sweat. "*I* strong? *I* wise? Oh, uncle!"

"Come, Barney, why so modest? I say, strength and wisdom, as the world goes, are yours. Here we've a hundred guineas in this little bag; what then? to a lad of your wit they're of little worth. You'll never miss 'em. Now, here," and Palms slid the coin along the table, "here are five guineas."

"Five! uncle!"

"Five. The reward of your skill—of the skill you have shown this morning."

"Five guineas? skill? uncle!"

"Never doubt it, Barney; take up the money, and never mistrust that head of thine; for well I know, that the fellow who, in this working world,

cares not for his eggs '*over fresh*,' will, in the end, flourish as well though he begin with five guineas, as with five thousand."

The tone and manner of old Palms forbade any reply on the part of his nephew, who, nevertheless, received the eulogy with a sulkiness worthy of the great cynic. Indeed, had Barnaby pocketed five snow-balls, he could not have looked more blank and frozen; could not have mounted the borrowed horse, ready saddled to convey him to London, with more reluctant leg, with grimmer countenance. No wonder; Barnaby thought he had securely felt his way: now Barnaby had lost ninety-five guineas.

CHAPTER II.

THERE is a golden volume yet to be written on the first struggles of forlorn genius in London —magnificent, miserable, ennobling, degrading London. If all who have suffered would confess their sufferings—would show themselves in the stark, shivering squalor in which they first walked her streets—would paint the wounds which first bled in her garrets—what a book might be placed in the hands of pride!—what stern, wholesome rebukes for the selfish sons of fortune!—what sustaining sweetness for the faint of spirit! It is true,

the letters might be of blood—the tales of agony and horror—of noble natures looking serenely, with the hungry fox gnawing their bowels—of disappointment sinking to despair—of misery, dreaming of, and wooing death! And then, how many petty shifts to mask a haggard face with smiles—how many self-denials—how many artifices to hide a nakedness from laughing scorn! Nor would the tone be all of wretchedness. No: beautiful emanations of the human heart—the kindest ministerings of human affections would sweeten and exalt many a sad history. How often should we find the lowly comforting the high—the ignorant giving lessons to the accomplished—the poor of earth aiding and sustaining the richly-dowered!

Barnaby was in London; but not—our heart bounds as we declare it—not to add to the number of splendid vagabonds, now thrust from her thresholds to sleep in the market-place, and now, dining off plate cheek by jowl with my lord. Barney was speedily warm, as in wool, in the house of Messrs. Nokes and Styles; and with the combined wisdom and delicacy of a spider, began to feel his way to the foibles of his employers. Nokes was a man of brass—Styles a thing of willow. Assured of this, Barnaby immediately felt the propriety of bowing to the one, and bending the other.

"Look at that lazy brute,—he doesn't draw a single pound," remarked the observing Nokes, as one evening, standing at his warehouse door, he contemplated the progress of a passing waggon.

"Not half-a-pound, sir," chimed in Barnaby; "and yet, I doubt not, he eats his share of corn and hay. But this it is to be, as one may say, in partnership with those who *will* pull."

"Right, Barnaby;" and the countenance of Nokes darkened, as he watched the easy-going quadruped.

"They who *will* work, *may* work. Was Mr. Styles here to-day?"

It is our hope that the query of Barnaby was unconsciously coupled with his profound views of the distribution of labour—that he had innocently let fall a spark on the train of Nokes's smothered feelings. If, on the contrary, the conflagration were premeditated, the moral incendiary must have glowed at the flattering proof of his success; for Nokes was all but suffocated. The blood rushed to his face—retreated—rushed—went back—presenting unto Barney as fine an exhibition of "humours and spirits" as that recorded by the learned Peireskius, who at the cost of some words, sets forth the useful lesson he acquired through "an augmenting-glass or microscope,"—showing how a certain plebeian animal "setting himself to wrestle

with a flea, was so incensed that his blood ran down from head to foot, and from foot to head again!" Wise Peireskius! true philosopher! who from the bickerings of small despised animals extracteth better wisdom, learneth surer self-government, than the unthinking million carry from a dog-fight, yea, from a bull-bait! (Reader, when thou shalt behold a Nokes bursting with envy, hatred, and uncharitableness, think of the learned lord of Peiriesk and his little monitor—ponder, and let thy soul be instructed.)

"Lack-a-day! I'd quite forgot; 'tis Epsom races," cried Barney, in self-reproval of his unnecessary question, the face of Nokes again suddenly resembling a chemist's bottle by candlelight. "Epsom races!" repeated the speaker, in a tone that left nothing further to be advanced upon the subject. And Nokes evidently judged the words to be conclusive; for feeling—like a patriot at a public dinner—more than he could express, with a wisdom rarely exhibited on such occasions, he spoke not at all. He merely jerked out his watch; and, at a glance, calculated that in two hours at most he should be looked for to join his friends at whist.

Mr. Styles, in addition to his love of horse-flesh, had a passion for the rural and picturesque. He kept a country-house, under whose hospitable roof Barney was wont at times to eat a Sabbath meal,

having previously attended his inviter to the parish church. It was a sight to melt the thoughtless youth of Bridewell to behold Barney during service. There he was, pinned to the side of his employer; now seeking out the lessons of the day—now, with open mouth and staring eyeballs (an expression of features not disgraceful to any tombstone), outsinging a numerous Sunday-school, shrilly piping in the gallery. It is true, the clerk would cast a look of bitterness; but then, it was avowed that Barnaby never opened his mouth, that the poor man did not feel shaken on his throne.

"A most comfortable sermon, Barney?" remarked Styles, with a certain air of interrogation. "Most comfortable?"

"I'm a wicked creature, if I wouldn't have given a guinea for Mr. Nokes to hear it. Did you observe, sir, how that gentleman with the scarlet face and powdered head was moved? Pray, sir, who is he?"

"Humph! He's newly retired among us, Barney; I—I forget his name; but they tell me he has in his time been a great player."

"No doubt, sir; no doubt. Every word of the preacher seemed to enter him like a bodkin! A great player! poor wretch! Surely, sir, he can't have made all his money by playing?"

"Every penny, Barney."

"He keeps a coach!" cried Barney, in a modulated tone of polite amazement.

"A house," added Styles, "that did belong to the member of the county—a town mansion—and a shooting-box."

"All won by playing? Mercy upon us! The devil offers great temptations!" moralized Barney.

"Say what we will of him, Barney," responded Styles, with exemplary liberality towards a fallen foe; "say what we will of him, I am afraid the devil is no fool."

"And—and"—asked Barney, with a face somewhat uncorded from its first rigidity—"what may the gentleman have most played?"

"I can't exactly tell, but I believe principally low parts; such as footmen, clowns, and country boys!"

"Parts! I mean games! Chicken-hazard—short-whist—roulette—rouge-et-noir—or"—and Barney for some seconds continued the inventory, with a knowledge of the subject, wholly unexpected.

"Games! Understand me, Barney; I tell you the man was an actor, a stage-player."

Barney could not subdue a look of disappointment: in a moment, however, he returned to the subject. "Actor or not, I am sure he must have played. La, sir, did you see him when the doctor

thundered at gaming?" Truth to say, Styles was one of those profound sleepers who can sometimes snore at Jove's best bolts—"Ha! as I said, I'd sell a guinea cheap, so that Mr. Nokes had heard it."

Styles looked meaningly at Barney—drank off a glass of port—clasped his fingers—glanced a moment at his left shoe—and then, as a magpie turns his head, lifted his cheek inquiringly towards Nokes's well-wisher. "Gaming, sir, isn't it a sort of murder?" Styles nodded: "Wives and babes are killed by it. Isn't it a kind of arson—such capital houses are destroyed by it?" Styles nodded twice. "Isn't it the worst of robberies,—for the most innocent, most painstaking, most upright of partners may be made beggars by it?" Styles responded to the last query by a long succession of nods. "Then, sir, and saving your presence, I must say again,—I must say"—and here Barney emptied his glass, as seeking courage for the avowal —"I would have given five guineas had Mr. Nokes been with us at church this day."

"What do you mean, Barney?" asked Styles, with the look and tone with which folks usually address a ghost. "What do you mean?"

"Why, sir, this I mean"—and Barney drew his chair in confidential proximity to his master—"this I mean; I must say it—I can't help it—but, sir, I don't like whist clubs." And an emphatic blow

upon the table made the glasses leap at the aversion of the speaker.

"No more do I," replied Styles; and in the reply proved himself the master of a most difficult science—the art of saying very much in very little. Now, whether the wine was more than usually subtle, or whether the devotion of Barney had suddenly softened his employer,—certain it is, that Styles rapidly became an altered man. He who was usually silent and timid, became loud and self-asserting; inveighing, in good round terms, against the arrogance and imprudence of Nokes, and upbraiding himself for his pusillanimous deference to his dissipated partner.

"I have been a fool long enough Barney," insinuated the modest Styles; an assertion which his no less diffident hearer ventured not to deny. "Yes, yes; I have too long given the reins out of my own hands; have been a nobody in the firm." Barney shrugged his shoulders, and leered acquiescence. "A nobody!—worse than nobody!—a blockhead—a nincompoop—an ass!" Barney, with great moral courage, bowed to the justice of every epithet. "But," exclaimed Styles for the twentieth time, rising at the accomplished number, "I'll be so no longer—I'll"—

We have not the slightest doubt that a most beautiful peroration was, at this moment, destroyed

—barked down, by a yelping little spaniel, unhappily for oratory, lying with extended fore-paws beneath the chair of Styles; the whole weight of the speaker coming suddenly upon the left leg of Kitty, she howled and barked with a persevering vigour truly feminine; her agony and helplessness were not lost upon a sister; for Madge, a terrier bitch, sprang from an opposite corner, and, in an instant, almost joined her teeth in the neck of the wounded. Kitty howled in a more intense treble; Madge growled vengeance in deep bass; whilst Styles and Barney, having vainly tried to separate the disputants, for a moment stood and looked in each other's face,—the concert of female voices still continuing. "Did you ever see such a tyrannical fury?" asked Styles, with a hopeless look, pointing at the ravenous Madge.—The appeal was too much for the sensibility of Barney, who—the exclamation struck from him by a yet higher shriek on the part of Kitty—roared out,—"D—— that Nokes!" at the same time aiming an ineffectual kick at the newly-christened. Styles smiled benevolently at the oath. Barney, moved by the sufferings of Kitty, and a blow upon his own shin against the chair, dragged forth the combatants; Styles tugged at the spaniel, whilst Barney, with the wisdom of the cock-pit, placed the tail of the terrier between his teeth. At this picturesque moment, and most

unluckily for Madge, the servant bawled in at the door—

"Mr. Nokes!"

Down, with terrible force, came the grinders of Barney, the terrier quitted its hold, and, tearing out of the room, ran yelling close by Nokes, sometime her unsuspecting namesake.

"There—there—Barney!" cried Styles, and confusedly opened the door of a closet, within which, silently as a spectre, Barney felt his way. Styles, with the suffering spaniel under his arm, seated himself in his chair; the bitch, with female delicacy, squeaking little, but shaking her crushed fore-paw reproachfully in the face of the destroyer. Nokes entered; his countenance was lined and mysterious as lawyer-written parchment; there was mischief in it, though obscured by certain confusion; much malice and no little cowardice. He coughed, but, strange enough, no subject seemed to present itself. Luckily, he glanced at the streaming eyes and quivering paw of Kitty. "So—humph!—a dog-fight?"

"It's very odd," replied Styles, with the learned air of an F.R.S., "it's very odd—but though Kitty and Madge have been together these five years, they can't agree. It's very odd."

"When people can't agree," returned Nokes,

and he looked a Columbus as he propounded the moral discovery, "they had better part. Mr. Styles, for these three months I have been confirmed in this opinion."

"Longer—surely, longer. 'Tis two years since Mrs. Nokes had a separate maintainance."

Nokes, touched by the indelicate allusion to his domestic infelicity, in silence passed his five fingers across his brow, and said, with very cold dignity, "Mr. Styles, fortunately there are partnerships which may be dissolved."

"Fortunately," acquiesced Styles, stroking the head of Kitty.

"You wonder, Mr. Styles, why your dogs can't agree. Perhaps I can explain; it may be, that one is sporting out of doors all day, whilst the other is left at home to bark and keep house."

"What do you mean, Mr. Nokes?" asked Styles; and with forced tranquillity, he placed the bitch upon the hearth-rug. Had an oracle put an interrogative, it could not have been more searching —more impressive.

"I mean, sir, that I have a partner in view, whose habits of business, Mr. Styles"—

"Glad to hear it," interrupted Styles, "for as I have some time contemplated a dissolution, we can the sooner get rid of one another."

"No house can stand against the chance of such bets," cried Nokes. "Hundreds vanishing after hundreds."

"Bets! hundreds! No, Mr. Nokes, let us keep to the serious truth; guinea points, sir,—guinea points don't become a tradesman."

"Guinea points!—guinea—but, as we are happily of the same mind to separate, we won't talk nonsense."

"'Tisn't necessary," accorded Styles; "therefore, as we understand each other, may I not ask the name of your new partner?"

"Oh, certainly; a most industrious, pains-taking young man."

"Glad to hear it," said Styles again. "I think—indeed, I am sure, I have for myself just such a partner in my eye."

"I wish you all success," cried Nokes; "may I know who he is?"

"To be sure; a most business-like, prudent person. But, first, the name of your partner?"

"He doesn't yet know his good luck. But"—and Nokes looked with the eye of a fox over a farm-paling—"Can't you guess?"

"Hav'n't a notion. Yes—I think—I—"

"To be sure," cried Nokes,—"Barnaby; though I hav'n't told him,—Barnaby."

Styles hardly repressed a smile at the credulity

of Nokes; then, with a serious air, observed, "My good friend, don't count upon him. Allowing that I myself—though he is quite ignorant of the fact—were not determined upon offering him a partner's share, I am sure he would not—and, forgive me, my friend—he could not, join with you."

"Not!" exclaimed Nokes, and his eyes glittered like brass buttons—"And why not?"

"The lad is scrupulous; he can't abide cards," said Styles.

"You mean bets squandered upon fillies," replied Nokes, sarcastically.

"Pshaw! between ourselves, the young man has talked to me with tears in his eyes about your nightly whist; guinea points, Nokes—guinea points!"

Nokes leapt to his feet—and extending his arms—projecting his breast—and throwing back his head, cried aloud to the vacant ceiling, "Twopenny! As I have a soul to be saved—twopenny!"

Styles, subdued by the fervour of his partner, in a modulated tone proceeded, "I do assure you, Barnaby has always sworn to a guinea."

"A household crocodile!" cried Nokes. "Ah, friend Styles, had you lost as little by the last favourite,"—

"As little? How much, now—how much?" asked Styles, with a bridling air.

"Wasn't it five hundred?"

"A hat—a single hat to Jerry White—he wore it this very day at church—five hundred! Upon my conscience, and may I die a sinner, but 'twas a hat."

"Barnaby protested 'twas five hundred pounds."

"The hypocrite! he shall this moment speak to our faces."

"I wish he could; but though he told me you had asked him here to-day, he vowed he couldn't spend the Sabbath with a blackleg and a horse-racer."

"A blackleg!" screamed Styles, and the exclamation was answered by a shriek in a yet higher note from the cupboard. Nokes at once recognised the voice of Barney, and ran to open the door, when Styles, preventing him, turned the key, put it in his pocket, and hurried his partner into an adjoining room, Barney still raving—as his masters conceived—to be heard in explanation. After a lapse of some ten minutes, employed by Nokes and Styles, in mutual assurances of renewed faith and friendship, the key of the cupboard, with a check for ten pounds, was placed in the hands of Betty, armed with final orders touching the prisoner. The door was speedily unlocked; and Barney, his hands crimsoned as the Thane of Cawdor's, —blood on his face, and horror in his voice,

rushed out, sank in a chair, and in a tone of mingled fear and veneration, exclaimed—"The devil!" A common household occurrence will explain away the seeming mystery. The blessing of increase was upon all things owned by Styles; even his cats escaped not the general good. It so happened that seven kittens, scarce one day old, with their satisfied mother, were the unknown tenants of the cupboard, previous to the occupancy of Barney,—who, agitated by the colloquy of the partners, and having no thought, taking no pity, of the blind, had walked upon the embryo hopes of future Whittingtons. Two of the kittens being killed, the maternal instincts of the parent were aroused,—and when Nokes and Styles left their assistant, as they believed, yelling with compunction, he was suffering in various parts of his naked body, from the teeth and claws of a revengeful cat. It was with some difficulty that Betty explained to the confused young gentleman, the final decree of his late employers. They had sent him his salary for the current quarter, and Betty would lose no time in opening the door; a hope was expressed, that he would not show himself at the warehouse. Barney took his hat, and crawled from the house. The night was pitch black, and the rain beginning to fall,—he was soaked to the skin ere he had felt his way to his comfortless bed in London.

CHAPTER III.

"SIR, you talk of coincidences,"—thus one day spake to us a valiant captain of the local militia—"I will tell you, sir, a most remarkable coincidence: it is this, sir:—the very day on which Napoleon escaped from Elba, I marched with my regiment to Wormwood Scrubs!" We are about to match the coincidence of the gallant warrior for Middlesex.—Thus, be it known, that the very night on which Barnaby Palms was turned from the firm of Nokes and Styles, the soul of Peter Blond, mercer and hosier, Bishopgate-Without, was summoned to what is popularly called, a last account. From a subsequent calculation made by the widow, it was evident that Peter had vacated his house of clay the very instant Barnaby left the roof of Styles: yes, as Betty turned the key, Peter expired. Who, when they have heard our tale, shall say that Fortune doth not sometimes look above her bandage, to take a peep at vagrant merit? Who shall call her a mere romping hoyden, playing at blindman's buff, catching the ill-favoured and the worthless, and hugging them in her arms, whilst the fair and virtuous stand untouched in obscure corners?

Or, granted, that the goddess doth sometimes approach them, shall it be said, that it is only to show them her beautiful hands, and then to pass on? The truth is, we slander Fortune: because the wise and bountiful creature will not let us at all times and in all places have our wicked will of her, —like unprincipled rakes, we take a poor revenge by calling her naughty names. We are rejoiced to say it, Barnaby was not of these evil speakers. However, to proceed with his obligations to what the unthinking vulgar would call good luck.

The second day after his dismissal, Barnaby, his clear spirit obscured by thoughts of future dinners, walked—we should rather say, was led by his good genius—up Bishopgate-Without. Melancholy grew upon him as he went: balked in his best intentions by the ignorance and hasty prejudice of his employers—disappointed in his hopes of partnership—it might be, misrepresented to his fellow-creatures—the whole earth grew dim and blank. At that moment, so great was his disgust of the worldly wealth which he could not obtain, that in all his previous life, he never felt so serious—so religious. Whilst in this dark, solemn mood, an undertaker's porter walked with the elastic step of death before him, and presented to Barney's meditating eyes, a coffin of satisfactory respectability. Here was an accident—or, as our friend the captain

would have said, a coincidence! Were we not writing a veritable biography—were we hammering out a romance (hammering is a wrong term; considering the facility and the material with which such things are made, we should rather say glass-blowing), we would assure the reader, that Barney, struck by the omen, instantly forswore the world, lived his future life in an empty vault, and worked as sexton: but we write a stern, true thing, as the coming sequel will certify. Thus, as the eye of Barney fell upon the coffin-plate, his face brightened,—nay, became radiant as the visage of a saint in a cathedral window. Doubtless, urges the reader, Barney felt a spiritual ecstasy—a "rapt," as the mother Maria Teresa calls it? We do not speculate—we speak to facts. Barney, having devoured the inscription, brightened up, smote his right leg with much vehemence, and with huge strides walked onwards. The brief notice—that last short history of the noisiest of us—"Peter Blond, aged 64," told Barney that Mrs. Blond was left a solitary widow, without a child, but with a capital connexion. Shame upon ye, Barney! And out upon the vile and sordid matters blighting this beautiful, this liberal world,—that we should so often look for self-promotion to the coffin-plates of our neighbours! In few words—the deceased

interred—Barney became the widow Blond's first man of business.

For three years did Barney, with exemplary skill direct the affairs of the late Peter Blond. For three years did he proceed, cautiously feeling his way, as he believed, to the respect of the trade, and, as he hoped, to the affections of his mistress; who, be it known, had some five-and-twenty years the advantage of her deceased lord, being all that time his junior. The house flourished—the widow had long since cast away an unbecoming mourning—Barney grew sleek as a beaver—and all things promised——no, there was one doubt, one fear would haunt our hero. With a curious superstition, Barney felt all about him insecure, until the church had laid its hands upon it. Besides—and why are we thus tardy in our justice?—Barney had his principles. As he became prosperous, he felt a growing respect for character; nor was it altogether self that rendered him thus sensitive; he had the feelings of a man, and saw the situation of the widow. Let the following dialogue be his testimony.

"As for the world, Mrs. Blond, depend upon it, the world grows wickeder and wickeder." So saying, Barney moved closer to the widow, whose good-natured face seemed little shadowed by the misanthropy of her managing-man. The place was the

back-parlour—the time the hour of supper. The meal despatched, moral reflections—of which the above is not an unfavourable sample—flowed like a stream from the lips of Barney, evidently deeply impressed with the worthlessness of all living flesh. "It's enough, ma'am, to make a young man go into a wood, and turn hermit."

"What's the matter, Mr. Palms?" asked the still unanswered widow, for the sixth time.

"'Tis a hard thing to say; but I really do believe that all mankind are villains." (Whenever a gentleman says thus much, be assured, considerate reader, that he contemplates an instant offer of himself as a choice exception).

"What—all! Mr. Palms?"

"Nearly all, ma'am," responded Barney, showing his teeth. "Human creatures! snakes upon two legs, Mrs. Blond."

"Why—what—what has happened?" asked the widow, her face looking all the prettier for the earnestness of its expression.

"I am sure, ma'am, if this house had been roofed with silver, and floored with gold, I could not have been more contented with it. Since the death of your husband, no one has been so happy as I."

"Mr. Palms!"

"I—I won't say no one, ma'am; but it's hard

to leave when one might be so very, very comfortable."

"Oh! I perceive, Mr. Palms," tranquilly remarked the widow—"you have in view a better situation?"

"Better!" echoed Barney, in a hopeless tone, at the same time venturing a leer of soft reproach —"better!"

"Then what compels you to leave me?"

"You do," and Barney was almost strangled with tenderness.

"I! Mr. Palms?"

"For myself, ma'am, I care little what the world says. I—I hope I am an old file that defies the tooth of slanderous serpents. But, ma'am, I can't feel myself a man, and stand by to hear you wronged. What is gold to a good name!"

"Pray explain, Mr. Palms. In a word, sir, what"——

"The neighbours, ma'am—the neighbours," replied Barney, in deep expressive notes.

"And what of the neighbours?" briskly interrogated Mrs. Blond.

Barney, with exquisite delicacy evading a reply, proceeded—"I have made up all the books; the accounts are balanced to a farthing. Since your affairs have been in my hands, Mrs. Blond, I hope I may say they have not suffered."

"There never was a better book-keeper, Mr. Palms. But, sir, you spoke of the neighbours—what do they say—what dare they say?"

"Well, ma'am," and Barney did a violence to his feelings as he spoke, "the woman to the right tells every body—the Lord forgive her!—that we—that is, you and I, ma'am, are truly and lawfully married!"

"Married!" cried Mrs. Blond, in a voice that spoke a full knowledge of the awful responsibility. —"Married!"

"That's not the worst."—Mrs. Blond looked doubtingly.—"That's not the worst: for the woman to the left, with all her teeth and nails, denies it. She says,"——

Little Mrs. Blond breathed hard with suppressed disgust at the malevolence of the world. "And what does she say?"

"She swears we certainly are not married; but swears as strongly, that—that—we—ought—to—be." Mrs. Blond sat silent and flushing. Barney, with profitable insensibility, mistaking the blushes of offended beauty for the tumultuous confusion of a surprised heart, dropped upon his knees, and seized the hand of the widow. At that instant—and as though by conspiracy—out went the candle!—at the same point of time, to complete the confusion of the widow, Bobby, the boy, coming to the

door, bawled through the darkness—"Is Mr. Palms gone home, ma'am?—may I lock up?" Barney scrambled to his feet—and the widow unconsciously called for a light. A light was instantly supplied by the staring boy, who was directed by his mistress to attend Barney to the door. Palms followed Bobby a few paces, then stopping short, returned to the widow. "As I said, dear Mrs. Blond—as I said, ma'am, what is gold to a good name?" Mrs. Blond said nothing. Barney, taking silence for his best friend, in plain direct terms urged his suit. It was apparent that late incidents had had their due effect on the prudence of the widow. For at his vigorous solicitation, she promised to meet Barney at the church. That the ceremony might attract no attention on the part of gossiping neighbours, Mrs. Blond stipulated that it should take place at a certain little village on the Sussex coast. All this negotiation was the fruit of scarcely five minutes, Bobby standing with his finger on the street-door latch. Barney walked "like man new made" to the spot where the boy, with a candle twixt his fingers, in fine *chiar'oscuro* awaited him. Now Barney, looking down upon the urchin, saw his eyes twinkling with meaning, and his mouth drawn up like a rabbit's into a smothered titter. On this, anticipating somewhat his dominorial rights, Barney boxed the boy's ears, calling him "a

———sneering little scoundrel." He then strided into the street, and like a lover gazed on the moonlight. The clear beam fell upon the house, and as Barney gazed at the golden letters "Blond," he might be dreaming, but he saw them fade and disappear, and in their place beam forth, in lambent brightness—"Palms."

But a few days and Barney was wandering—musing on wedding-rings—on the Sussex shore. It had been arranged by the widow and himself, that they should separately leave town, and meet at the church door on the appointed morning. Barney had engaged the best apartments at the best inn, and in eight-and-forty hours he might call the widow, with all her funded wealth, her stock, and outstanding debts, his own. His feelings seriously directed by the coming event, he attended the parish church with the best intentions. But where shall weak man hide, where temptation is not? Placed immediately opposite to the destroying eyes of woman, do not our resolutions, though built of granite, melt like wax? Thus it was with Barney; he was stared into weakness, falsehood—but let us not pursue the theme: a syren voice whispered in his ear—"to-night—at eleven—the churchyard,"—and then the blooming tempter vanished.

If there be a dreary, "aching void" in the time

of man, it is the four-and-twenty hours preceding marriage, or, though culprits may differ—hanging. Now Barney, though brimful of love, was in a strange town, with nothing to do but to count the minutes. Thus, if at eleven o'clock he walked to the churchyard, it was not to lose his constancy, but his time. As for bed, could he sleep on the eve of the glad to-morrow? To the churchyard then he sauntered. The night was dark—the wind cold—he listened for the "voice of the charmer," and heard the owl hoot from the belfry. Thinking he was tricked, he felt a touch of compunction for the widow: blushing for his weakness, he turned to seek his inn, when he felt his hand grasped, and a low, soft "hush" fell upon his ear. Ere he could reply to the admonition, his legs were off the ground—a bandage over his eyes and mouth—and his arms pinioned. Could Barney have been an impartial judge, he himself would have eulogized the celerity of the operation. In a thought, he felt himself rocking in a cradle: the plashing of oars convinced him of his error: he was on "the wide and open sea."

To be sold for a slave was the least Barney looked for; perhaps to become the property of the Grand Turk—to be promoted—(promoted!)—to a keeper of the seraglio! Barney thought of the widow, and grew cold from head to sole. Barney

was blindfolded; yet did he plainly see a gang of buccaniers with moustaches long as ordinary pig-tails. The boat was speedily alongside a very suspicious looking craft. Barney was happily spared the sight of her.—The captive was lifted aboard, and unceremoniously, as a bale of coarse merchant dise, flung into a corner called a berth. This acseemed to be a preconcerted signal with wind and wave; for almost on the instant, a stiff gale sprang from the north-west—the sea rose in mountains, and the vessel, light as a cork, danced upon their tops. In this uproar, what was to be expected of the stomach of Barney, anything but amphibious? It was evident that his keepers had formed a right opinion of its weakness, for with a latent feeling of humanity—let us praise where praise is due—they had taken the bandage from Barney's mouth.

The storm roared itself, like a wilful child, to rest, and the morning dawned upon the wave, bright and gorgeous. It was the wedding morning of Barnaby Palms—and, lying coiled like a distempered dog in his nook, he told the hours struck from the church, where, in brief time, a disappointed bride would weep for him. Barnaby sighed; the time wore on—he groaned: another hour, he called aloud; another and another, and he raved and stormed and begged to be put ashore. Coarse and violent as his persecutors had shown

themselves, they still were men; and knowing that the situation of Barney was—as the newspapers, when the fact was known, would propound—more easily felt than described,—they opened the door of his prison, and suffered him to feel his way upon deck. Barney saw no slave-ship—but the "Jemima," smuggling-cutter of Hythe.

"Shore! shore!" exclaimed Barney, and he looked with devouring eyes towards the beach.

"Ay, ay, sir," was the dogged reply of an old tarpauling, "all in good time, your honour."

"Mayhap the gentleman never see'd Flushing," conjectured a second. "If so, we'll give him passage free."

"My good fellows," cried Barney, whose extreme agitation rendered him insensible to the cold irony of his captors, "my good fellows, I forgive the joke—I—ha! ha!—'twas a capital hoax—but don't push it too far. I must go ashore."

One of the crew approached him, and with a confidential air, asked—"Can you swim?"

"No—no—no!" cried Barney, scarcely repressing his tears.

"What a pity!—for we can't spare you a boat. Up with the anchor, lads."

"Gentlemen—I tell you I am looked for—I am expected—I—I am going to be married!"

"Oh!" cried three or four, as though at once

won by the necessities of Barney, "he's going to be married, lads—let's give him a wedding-suit."

Ere Barney could inquire into the liberal proposition, a bucket of tar was placed at his feet. "Now, sir," asked one of the sailors, with forced politeness, at the same time poising in his hand a brush dropping the unsavory liquid—"now, sir, which will you have on first, your waistcoat or your breeches?" Barney opened his mouth, no doubt to proclaim his preference, when the brush, maliciously directed, stopt the communication. Then straightway, Barney grinning horribly the while, was he daubed from head to heels. The clock struck as the operation was finished.

"Ugh! oh! murder! let me go ashore—let me fly"—gasped the now water-proof Barney.

"Jack, the gentleman wants to fly; where's his wings?"

With a noble sacrifice to the desires of the visitor, the only feather-bed aboard was brought upon deck, instantly unripped, and its contents carefully distributed about the person of Barney. As he picked the feathers from his eyes and mouth, and blew out his big cheeks, he looked a monstrous mixture of the ape and penguin. "There—I declare," exclaimed one of his valets, "talk of a wedding!—why you're drest for Neptune's daughter." The boat was then brought alongside. Barnaby very

gladly took a seat in it, and four of the crew prepared to pull him ashore. "I wonder," said one of the men, "what's become of that fellow—Barnaby Palms I think they called him—who, when he was turned from the firm of Nokes and Styles, informed about that little matter of French lace? I wonder what's become of him!" Here Barnaby might have been communicative; he said nothing, but shook his feathers. Having reached the shore, the men insisted upon carrying Barney into the churchyard——to the very spot where he was to have met the false fair, from certain after circumstances shrewdly suspected to be the lawful wife of one of the smugglers.

In a thought the conspirators had vanished, and Barney was alone among the tombs. Hearing the sound of voices, and confused by the ludicrous spectacle he presented, he ran blindly forward, was tripped up by some osiers, and rolled headlong into a grave, dug, as it would seem, on purpose, that very morning. As he lay stunned and confounded, the bells rang out a merry peal, striking into Barney a sense of his situation. He rose upon his feet, and with his hands grasping the edge of the grave he lifted his head half way above the surface, and saw —proceeding from the church—a blushing, new-made bride, in the person of the late Mrs. Blond, —and in her happy husband, the silkman from the

opposite shop. Mrs. Blond had long reflected on his secret offers, but the wisdom of Barney—his fine delicate sense of feeling his way—had fixed her for ever. The silkman walked on, a bridegroom: Barney stood where he was, a bachelor. His rival was bound for life: Barney was only tarred and feathered!

CHAPTER IV.

In the foregoing chapters we have confined ourselves to two great disappointments of our hero, who, however, as he felt his way through life, had manifold small successes. It is true that fortune, when she promised most, had shown herself most fickle; yet had she rewarded Barney with a thousand gifts. Thus, ere he had completed his three-and-fortieth year, Barney had "land and beeves." His miraculous sense of touch, like that of Midas, had turned some of the dirtiest matters into gold. (Indeed, when we daily witness the alchymy exercised by some folks, we think little of the wonders of the long-eared king.) It is confessed, he had groped in dark corners for his wealth—but then, how much higher his merit—how much greater the discovery? It is only the

vulgar mind that thinks to win its fortune along the broad highway of life, in clearest day; the nobler genius, hugging itself in its supremacy, searches pits and holes, with this sustaining creed—that though the prize acquired be not really of half the worth to that picked up in open light, it has to the finder a double value, because obtained in secrecy and gloom.

"A broken heart, Mr. Palms! you don't believe in any such nonsense?"

In truth, Barney was not so weak; since he felt himself a reasoning creature he had ever doubted that much talked of phenomenon: moreover, a recent visit to the museum at Surgeon's Hall had confirmed him in his unbelief; he had seen, to the best of his memory, no such preparation. Hence, he had used the words "a broken heart," as, we trust, a pardonable figure of speech. "To be sure not, Mr. Fitch; to be sure not. All I meant to say was, that if Louisa"—

"You are a steady, sober man, Mr. Palms—what is more, you have an excellent business, Louisa wants a husband—you want a wife—I consent to the match—you don't object to it—then what more need be said about the matter?"

The speaker who was thus smoothing Barney's walk to the church, was, in the course of events, soon destined to go thither himself; certain it is,

he looked affianced to the undertaker. "A broken heart! ha! ha!" and the old, white-haired gentleman crowed like a cock at the extravagance.

Barney smiled an instant approval of the old man's merriment, and then, looking becomingly grave, observed, "And—and your fortune, Mr. Fitch?"

"Every penny yours—every penny, when—when I die," and Mr. Fitch straitened his back, and shook his head, and winked his eye, as though he had spoken of the Greek Kalends, or the millennium. Death himself—though about to strike—must have been tickled at the gay self-assurance of brave four-score.

"And the day,—the happy day, Mr. Fitch?"

"Humph! the day? say Thursday, Barney—yes, Thursday. We'll keep the wedding at—at my friend Clay's house—the Fox-and-Goose at Stepney."

Now, Barney, since his affair with the widow Blond, was become less confident of his sorcery over the gentle sex; and had thus, with the wisdom which haunted him through life, felt his way to the affections of Louisa, through the medium of her grandfather. Sure we are that Barney, in all he had said or looked at his bride, had never transgressed the bounds of the coldest drawn civility: the iciest nun had not complained of the warmth of Barney.

Louisa having no relative, no friend in the world, save her grandsire, was naturally enough, in the opinion of the venerable man—wholly and unreservedly at his dispossal. Having reared her from childhood, he looked upon her as so much live timber, to be carved into any image, after the fancy of the planter. She might—indeed we must say she did—venture some remonstrance; but surely four-score better knew what was fitter for eighteen, than witless eighteen itself. In a word, Louisa Fitch was to marry Barnaby Palms; the bride had received her orders from her rich grandfather—and Thursday was the day appointed.

At length, Barney approached the haven of his hopes. He had felt his way to more than competence; he had now within a hair's breadth of his fingers a rich, a youthful, and not unhandsome bride; though in the main affairs of life, Barney shut his eyes to what is vulgarly called, and paid for, in some sort of coin—beauty. Blind to outward bloom, he acknowledged virtue by the touch; and Louisa—on the death of her revered grandsire—was to have ten thousand pounds. In the ears of Barney, the guineas were already ringing on the old man's tomb-stone!

Thursday came. We will not dwell upon the emotions of the bride; such trifling—the more as it was unconsidered by our hero—accords not with

the gravity of our theme—with the deep lesson that we hope to teach. Old Mr. Fitch and some half-dozen friends, all gaiety and smiles, were present: Barney was in his best, and Louisa was duly shrouded in white. The ceremony was concluded—despite the ominous spectres that even at the altar haunted the bridegroom. It might be the embarrassing novelty of his situation that deceived his senses, for, looking upward, he saw the wings of carved cherubims plumed with real feathers—and snuffing the air, he thought he scented the marine odour of tar. No matter; Barney was married. Placing the marble hand of his bride under his arm he quitted the church.

Up to this moment, old Mr. Fitch was gay and chirruping: whilst his benevolent tyranny was in course of execution, he was in the highest spirits. The knot, however, was no sooner tied, than—possibly from excess of joy—the old man turned ghastly pale. He was led from the church; but, ere he could gain the carriage at the gate, was compelled to rest himself; he sat upon a grave—and Barney approaching, looked at him, with an eye of anticipation. With some assistance, Mr. Fitch was placed in the coach; the party proceeded to the inn, and—the grandfather quickly rallying—there were high hopes of festive dinner. Vain are all earthly promises! Just as the first course was

laid, the old man relapsed—was carried to bed—and, in three hours, was ready for the mattock and the spade. It was supposed that the extreme coldness of the church had quickened his end. We pass much woe and lamentation, to conclude our story.

Barney was the possessor of ten thousand pounds. Had he weakly consulted the wishes of Louisa, they had doubtless passed to another bridegroom: he had—he thanked his wisdom—felt his way through the grandfather!

It struck twelve as Barney sought his bridal couch. He had already one leg in bed, when a bright thought arrested him. Taking a candle, he withdrew from the chamber, to seek the room of the dead man. In good time, Barney had recollected the silly vanity of old Fitch, who was wont to carry in his pockets a thousand or two in bank-paper. This might be stolen; he, as heir, should instantly seize the property. As he became fully confirmed in this idea, a current of wind extinguished the candle. For a long time, Barney continued silently to feel his way; but the Fox-and-Goose was an old, old house—with corridor and passages, and winding staircases, and——

A shriek was heard, and no more!—

A coroner's inquest, sitting next day at the Fox-and-Goose, on the body of a gentleman disco-

vered at the bottom of the stairs, returned a verdict of "Found dead." This was of course in default of full evidence, otherwise the verdict would have run—"*Died of too much feeling his way.*"

Poor Barney! he had smiled—nay, in his heart had chuckled—when he say old Fitch seated on a grave. And now, had Barney "felt his way!"

TITUS TRUMPS;

THE MAN OF "MANY HOPES."

CHAPTER I.

It is recorded in the family archives of the Trumps, that at a very early age, our hero Titus gave striking promise of that faculty which, in his mature days, made him a proverb to all who knew him. A sheep-stealer of considerable celebrity—a luckless Jason—was about to pay the penalty of his unlawful love for other people's mutton; in hard, worldly phrase, was sentenced to be hanged. Many sheep had of late been missed, and the judge of the assize had, with considerable distress of mind, expressed his determination to make an example for the benefit of society. Gubbins was to be strangled, not for his proper crime alone, but for "an example" to society. Dame Trumps, the grandmother of little Titus, took the most laudable pains to impress upon the child a religious horror of the wickedness of Gubbins, dwelling very minutely on the awful ceremony to take place the

next morning; and marshalling to the fancy of the bewildered infant, the sheriff, the parson, the javelin men, the hangman, the constables, all the actors in the social tragedy; Titus looking sadder and sadder as the procession lengthened. There was silence, and the dame had renewed her darning, when little Titus jumped from his stool at his grandam's feet, and clapping his hands, leapt and laughed to the astonishment of the old lady.

"You wicked child! what will become of you? don't I tell you that to-morrow morning, the people at the prison are ordered to take Gubbins out and hang him—eh?" cried grandmother.

"Yes, I know—I know," said Titus, "only, perhaps, grandmother," and the boy smiled and rubbed his little hands, "perhaps"—

"Perhaps!" exclaimed Mrs. Trumps, "perhaps what?"

"Perhaps they may forget it," said the boy, and the hope had no sooner flashed upon him, than it grew into a certainty. This little story of the nursery we had omitted, did it not, in an especial manner, mark the development of that peculiarity which clung to Titus to his last hour. With Titus there was neither past nor present; he lived in the future. Nothing about him was real; he dwelt in a world of shadows: the tangible good was always

that *to come*. His life had no yesterday, no to-day —it was a life entirely made of to-morrows.

Whether the temperament of Titus be happy or unfortunate—whether it was to him a fatal weakness, or a prosperous strength, the reader, if he will attend the adventures of our "Man of Many Hopes," may, for himself determine.

Titus Trumps, inheriting a small patrimony from his deceased father, and having endowed himself with great hopes of an improved income from a maternal maiden aunt, had never addressed himself to any calling. A mere trade was vulgar, and the more to be eschewed as he had assured himself of the property of his sire's sister: she was a prudent, thrifty woman, and every day must add to her wealth. That the amount of her property was not known, was, in the mind of Trumps, an assurance of its immensity. She dwelt in a small comfortable cottage, where Titus was wont to be a frequent visitor. Indeed, his unchecked flow of spirits made him a general favourite; and Miss Virginia Trumps did not deserve the reproach, too frequently and too hastily bestowed upon ungathered maidens. She was a happy, equable soul, with a face for a smile, nay, with lungs for laughter. Titus sat one day at tea with his aunt, when, to her surprise, he advanced the following insinuation.

"Now, I dare say, aunt, you—you have somewhere, another tea-pot besides that?"

"To be sure, Tity," said Miss Trumps, "why, what put that in your head?"

"I mean, aunt—ha! ha!—perhaps, a rich, curious tea-pot, eh?" and Trumps rubbed his hands, and looked laughingly at the spinster.

"Well, I declare! was there ever such a boy!"—and the old maid laughed in concert.

"I was sure you had, aunt—ha! ha!—certain of it—a rich tea-pot, eh? too rich for every day, eh?"—and Titus twinkled his eyes, and rubbed his hands with glee.

"To be sure: every day, indeed?—your dear uncle Robert, that was carried up the country by the black princess, and never heard of again"—

"Who knows!" interrupted Trumps, touched by his deceiver, hope—"who knows? Perhaps, I've a cousin king somewhere—eh, who knows?"

"Didn't he bring me a tea-pot from Canton?" said Miss Trumps, unmindful of the possible honour accruing to her from a regal nephew.

"And you have hoarded it up,—you wouldn't take any money for it?" cried Titus.

"Not its weight in gold," exclaimed Miss Trumps, with considerable emphasis; and the heart of Titus leapt at the avowal.

The reader may, with the maiden aunt, feel some

surprise at the interest taken by Titus in tea-pots. Let us explain. Titus had only that morning read an account of the death of an old solitary woman, who, though passing as very poor among her neighbours, had left, with other hoarded wealth, a large tea-pot filled with guineas. Miss Trumps was about the age of the deceased woman—like her she lived alone—was very saving,—seldom stirred out, and was, indeed, in the opinion of Titus,—an opinion confirmed after a scrutinising view of his beloved aunt—the very woman to hoard guineas in a tea-pot. The significant manner with which his aunt declared the utensil to be worth its weight in gold, convinced Titus beyond all chilling doubt, that it was brim-full of that precious metal. In fact, the thing spoke for itself—indeed, she had owned it: the tea-pot was worth "its weight in gold!" Long before Titus had taken his leave, his hopes had conjured up the largest tea-pot ever manufactured in China, and had calculated the greatest number of guineas that could, by possibility, be laid in it.

Titus Trumps was in his two-and-twentieth year, when, full of hope, he sat in a London coach on his way to the metropolis. He had no friends, no acquaintance dwelling there, but he never doubted that he should immediately obtain those desirable advantages. He already saw himself in a circle of

the most amiable, the most obliging people. How many men had walked to London with only a staff —had slept on the road by hay-stacks — had eaten cresses and dry bread, and had entered the capital of the world with blisters at their soles, and not a farthing in their pockets, and had afterwards become golden merchants; yea, had, in their day, been aldermen and mayors, knights and baronets, to boot,—and dying, had left alms-houses for the helpless and the aged! Leaning back in the coach, Titus with half-closed eyes, already saw himself at court — already felt the royal sword upon his shoulder—already beheld, as in a vision, his female pensioners in white caps and aprons—his old, old men, in decent grey! Such were the hopes of Titus Trumps, when the coach suddenly stopt to change horses. A man ran from a neighbouring house to the dismounted coachman.

"Inside place, coachman?" said the man.

"Full," said the laconic coachman. "One out."

"Oh! she can't go out in this rain," said the man.—It poured a deluge.

"Stay behind, then," said the accommodating driver.

"But you don't know who she is"—here the stranger half-whispered confidentially to the coachman, Trumps distinctly hearing the important communication. "She's daughter of General Wolfe."

The coachman scratched his head at the intelligence, glanced inside the coach to assure himself that it was full, then cast his eye up at the box, and observed—"Wrap her up—plenty of coats."

At this instant the lady appeared, a damsel following her with a couple of fragile band-boxes. "Outside! in such weather—impossible," cried the lady, on learning the proposal of the coachman.

"Sorry for it—time's up," said the driver, and he mounted the box.

"Stop—stop," cried Trumps, thrusting himself half out of the coach-window—and now smiling on the lady, and now looking from side to side for the coachman and guard, both of whom he requested, in a most peremptory manner, to attend to him.—"Stop—stop—here, guard—I'll get out—I'll"—and Trumps, opening the door, jumped from the coach. "Miss Wolfe can have my place," said Titus, bowing to the lady, greatly confused by the unexpected gallantry of the young and handsome passenger,—for Titus was a smart-looking fellow—the coachman and the guard exchanging looks of wonder, rather than admiration, at the generosity of the inside gentleman.

"Really—couldn't think of depriving the gentleman—in such dreadful weather, too,"—objected the young lady.

"Only a few drops—a passing shower," said the

hopeful Trumps, the rain pouring as from twenty thousand spouts.

"Better get in, Miss," said the guard, assisting the young lady, who, with the meekness of the sex, suffered herself to be overcome.

"A lovely girl, that," said Titus Trumps, when mounted beside the coachman, who was wet and dripping as an otter.

"Very fairish, sir," replied the driver. "A little wet, isn't it?" he then observed, with a malicious smile at the situation of Titus.

"I—I don't think it will last," answered the sanguine Trumps.

"No, sir; I shouldn't think it would go beyond the month," was the satirical comment. Then, after a pause—"Few gentlemen, sir, as would turn themselves inside out, this weather. Shouldn't wonder, sir, if the ladies give you a medal. It is wet, isn't it?" asked the coachman, a stream pouring from the rim of his hat between the neck and neckcloth of Titus.

"It *can't* last," said Trumps, suppressing a shiver. "A very beautiful girl—I may say, an angel."

"Everybody to their taste, sir. To be sure, if she isn't quite an angel at present, why, you know, it's her own fault if she isn't by-and-by. Very wet, sir?"

"It's going off," cried Trumps.

"Yes, sir; you may say the tide's running very fast down,—better put that coat about your legs, sir," said the benevolent coachman.

"Thank you—thank you. No, it can't last long," said Titus, the rain falling in sheets.

"No, sir, at this rate I don't see where it's to come from.—I hope the lady 's comfortable."

"She lives in London?" asked Trumps.

"I believe you, sir,—one of the best houses in it. After your civility, sir, I'm sure they'd like to see you there; poor thing! she might have caught her death, for it *is* wet, sir—isn't it?"

Trumps made no answer; his thoughts were far away from the querist—and his feelings were weather-proof. The daughter of General Wolfe! He had resigned his place to the child of a hero—to the offspring of an immortal soldier! He had always felt a mysterious respect for the profession of arms; and how strange that, as it might be said, in his first entry into life, accident should have cast him near the daughter of the great Wolfe! There was, doubtless, patronage in the family. The lady had looked smilingly upon him! If, now, he should be presented with a commission; and, if ordered abroad on some delicate and dangerous service, he should be able to distinguish himself in the eyes of the world; and if, returning, his brows bound with

laurels, and his breast bearing a dozen orders, he should ask and win the lady for his wife! Or, if—for it was as well to consider the calamitous part of war—if he should be killed? Well he would die upon the bed of glory. No, there was gloom upon that picture, and he would not look on it. He might be slightly wounded, and would survive to receive the thanks of the army—of the parliament! —They made baronets, earls, marquises, dukes of prosperous heroes! He might be the father of a family, and his eldest son (the pledge of himself and the unsuspecting lady inside) might bear the royal train at the next coronation! How wise in him to have always spurned a trade! He might have been a grocer! He who would sit among the peers of England, and mend and make laws, might have vended barley-sugar—dealt in figs! That he should have been enabled to oblige Miss Wolfe! On what trivial things—such was the trite reflection of our traveller—hung the fate of man! And for twenty minutes, or more, Titus Trumps was a military duke, a conqueror, with at least one estate in six different countries, and with, perhaps, the office of commander-in-chief at home. Happy Titus Trumps! Quick and bountiful are the gifts of hope; and now, in her brightest blue, and with her sunniest looks, she leaned upon her anchor, and

smiled graciously on Titus, who, though wet as a soaked sponge, was glowing in imaginary place.

The coach arrived late in London; Trumps hastened to descend, that he might hand the lady out. Quick as he was, he had been anticipated in that pleasing attention by a tall, sallow young man, sparkishly habited, who looked rather frowningly upon the advances of our hero.

"The gentleman had been so kind as to give up his place;" the tall young man bowed stiffly. "Dear heart!" added the lady, he was "very wet."

"Not at all—not in the least—perhaps, a little damp," replied the saturated Trumps. "He trusted, however, that Miss Wolfe"——

The tall young man bent his brows, the lady coloured, and Titus paused: ere he could again essay a speech, the fair damsel was lifted into a hackney-coach by the strange young gentleman, who followed and seated himself authoritatively beside her. If the reader have ever seen a tipstaff in a coach with his victim, he has seen, in the deportment of the functionary, the same cold consequence displayed by the companion of "Miss Wolfe." He sat, very like a bailiff or a brute of a husband. "Her brother, no doubt," thought Trumps, as the coach drove away: that the lady should be already

a wife, never suggested itself: though, had a fear of that calamity possessed Titus, he would have found comfort in the unhealthy complexion of her yoke-fellow;—a man with such looks could not live many months. Trumps, foiled in his hopes of the lady's single blessedness, would have sought comfort in her speedy widowhood.

CHAPTER II.

THE next morning, Trumps awoke haggard and feverish. He had, in his dreams, been at Quebec—had achieved the most heroic feats—had received Miss Wolfe from the hands of her father—and had been married by the chaplain of the garrison, the troops forming in hollow square during the ceremony. The marriage was no sooner solemnized, than the dreamer heard the wild yell of the Indians—the bride was torn from his arms—he had followed her through woods and swamps—and had at last fallen into the hands of the savages. Already, the chief had flung him upon the earth—already, the knife glittered in his eyes—already, the wild man was about to add another scalp to his hundred, when Trumps, even dreaming, found hope in the crisis; for he thought he wore a wig! With this exulting feeling, he awoke. It was with some

satisfaction that he discovered his head upon a goose-feather pillow—and on that head, the pride of his heart, natural locks in luxuriant growth. He ran his fingers through his curls, and felt himself a man again.

"Your name, sir, is"——

"Trumps—Titus Trumps," said our hero, holding forth his hand to receive a letter brought by the waiter, as Trumps seated himself for breakfast.

"Not for you, then, sir," said the man. "Beg your pardon—gentleman in thirty-two," and the servant quitted the room, to the disappointment of Trumps, who, without any reasonable expectation of the favour, saw in the missive a letter from his aunt, and, looking inside it with the eyes of hope, beheld there a bank-bill to a handsome amount. "She certainly did not promise to write," thought Trumps, buttering his roll; "but then there was no knowing—she might." Trumps put the first morsel in his mouth, then instantly jumped up, and violently rang the bell. The waiter immediately appeared.

"What might want, sir?" asked the man, looking seriously at Titus, in whose face were strong marks of disgust.

"Want! why, my man—this is—really—this is very bad butter," said Trumps.

The waiter smiled, closed his hands, and with a slight, graceful bow, replied,—"Very bad, indeed, sir."

"And—and," Trumps stammered, confused by the acquiescence of the man—"and you don't call this tea? It's chopped birch—isn't it?"

Again the waiter smiled, closed his hands, bowed, and audibly answered,—"Chopped birch."

"Well! if ever I—and the milk—you don't call it milk—I—I call it water," said the astonished Trumps.

"Water, sir" observed Robert Straight, to the astonishment of the discontented guest.

"And this chop—phewgh!—you don't pretend to say it's eatable?" cried Trumps.

Robert Straight raised the accused article to his nose, then "took't away again," slightly lifted his shoulders, and said with some emphasis,—"Not eatable, sir."

Trumps felt himself defeated. He had condemned everything upon the table, and the waiter, having cheerfully acquiesced in his conviction, left him without words. It was useless to complain, where there was such unanimity of opinion. Titus looked about him for new matter of discontent, but found that he had exhausted every subject. Had Robert declared the butter to be sweet as new-blown hawthorn—the tea, from the private chest of

the Emperor of China himself—the milk, the purest cream, and the chop but that morning from the living lamb, Trumps would have been pleased—gratified with the opposition of sentiment. It would have been some exercise for him to have contested the points; but they were at once given up, quietly yielded by the enemy, and further words were but vain and useless flourishes. As nothing was disputed, nothing was to be said. Hence, Trumps ate the condemned breakfast in silent resignation, Robert Straight leaving him the full enjoyment of his undisputed opinion. (It would have been well, however, had Robert not always thus accommodated himself to the opinions of others—had he now and then ventured to demur, we think much remorse might have been spared him. Robert appeared a mild, peaceable man, and yet he had been accused by many of her conniving gossips, of the death of the wife of his bosom. "Ar'n't you a villain and a vagabond?" Mrs. Straight would ask of her husband twenty times a day; and as often as she asked the question, so often would her impartial husband make answer and say,—"Both, my love; both." No woman could endure such treatment long: the poor creature died of a broken heart; and it was roundly asserted, and seemingly with great truth, that she expired of the slow cruelty of her tyrannical helpmate.)

"You saw that lady who came last night by the coach?" asked Trumps of Robert, summoned in due season to clear the table.

"Saw the lady, sir," said Robert.

"I mean Miss Wolfe."

"Oh! Ha!—yes, Miss Wolfe," said the smiling Robert, whose creed it was to contradict nobody.

"She's very handsome; perhaps, very rich?" remarked Trumps carelessly.

"Very handsome—very rich," cried Robert, to the satisfaction of Titus.

"People in your situation hear a great deal about high folks, eh?" asked Trumps.

"Great deal," answered Robert.

"You know where that lady lives?" inquired Titus.

"Know where she lives," replied Robert.

"She is not engaged—I mean, there is no talk of?"——

"Not engaged,—no talk," was the answer of Robert.

"And that young man, who—by the way, it was odd, that she should travel alone," said Titus.

"Odd, sir," responded Robert.

"And in a public coach, eh?"

"Public coach, sir."

"Though your people of real dignity have no affectation," said Trumps.

"No affectation," answered Robert.

"It's only your mushrooms, who"——

"Only mushrooms, sir," replied Straight.

"Her father—ha!—a great man?"

"Very large, sir."

"But that young gentleman who was waiting for her? I suppose, her brother?" questioned Trumps, somewhat earnestly.

"Her brother," echoed Robert Straight; and if Trumps had supposed him to have been her father, —"her father" would have been the response of the accommodating Robert.

"You couldn't tell me where she lives?" asked Titus.

"Couldn't tell you where she lives, sir," chimed Straight.

"That's strange, eh?"

"Strange, sir;" and all this time, Robert was busily employed clearing the table, and when Trumps was about to put another question to that human echo, Straight had vanished.

"Not engaged! No—I was sure of that, quite sure," said the sanguine young gentleman, and he fell into a deep study, contemplating the necessary ways and means for the lawful possession of Miss Wolfe. "Waiter," cried Trumps, having at length decided upon the first step,—"waiter," and Robert, who was gliding across the floor, again

stood before Titus. "You perfectly recollect that lady?"

"Perfectly: red ribands—beaver hat—silk gown," said Straight.

"Now, attend to me. I'll give you seven shillings,—you hear?"

"Seven shillings," replied the waiter very correctly.

"If you will procure for me the address of that lady—and mind, not a word to anybody."

"Address, and not a word," answered Robert, and departed to obtain the information; not that it was at all necessary for him to quit the room for the intelligence, as he was already in full possession of it: but the pains he took seemed to enhance the value of the knowledge to be conveyed, making it better worth the offered price. "There, sir—the address," said Robert, presenting the delighted Trumps with a written card.

"I'll go this very morning," exclaimed Trumps. "My bill."

"Don't you stay to-night, sir?" asked the waiter.

"No—no: for my luggage, you can send it to this address;" for, of course, thought Trumps, they'll entertain me as their guest. "Humph—ha!" said Titus, viewing himself in a glass, "must brush up a little. A new loop in my hat—pshaw!

a new hat altogether—some new lace ruffles,—and, egad! this silver ring of grandfather's looks like a lump of pewter on my finger—a little diamond there won't be thrown away; no, no, it doesn't rain generals' daughters every day—I can afford to lay out for an heiress;" for in the flutter of his hopes, Trumps had quite forgotten the "brother" of the lady. "Must dress to-day, if I'm a sloven all my life," cried Trumps, still self-communing, and he sallied into the street, determined to purchase the necessary decorations. Titus had in his purse little more than fifty guineas; never before had fifty guineas seemed such a trifle. Elated with the certainty of speedy fortune—for with Titus the golden gift was no longer doubtful—he felt all the carelessness, the indifference of a sultan towards the petty cash about him. Arithmetic seemed a science suddenly unworthy of him—he might, in the fulness of his wealth, snap his fingers at figures. Such were his exulting thoughts as he entered a shop, smitten with the show of lace, with its cobweb meshes displayed to catch the flies without. The bargain was soon struck—the most expensive cravats and ruffles ordered to the inn, a hat, furnished with a glittering loop, and a cane, surmounted by a gold head, with chasing worthy of a Cellini, speedily followed, and Trumps thought himself equipped not for conquest —for the victory was gained—but for a triumphal

entry. Thirty guineas yet remained to him, when he suddenly paused at the window of a jeweller. At all events, he would ask the price of a ring.

"The finest of fine waters," said Mr. Glitter, the tradesman, as he presented a diamond ring to Trumps, who looked down upon it, whilst a smile played about his lips, and his eyes melted at the bauble. The jeweller in a moment knew his man. "If the stone were only as big again, upon my honour, sir, I can't tell you what it would be worth —I may say, money couldn't buy it." Still Trumps gazed at the diamond. "There, sir; look at the delicacy of the chasing. Ha! I don't know what I'd give for a workman who could do the like; the artist who did that, he's dead, poor man: any money is given for his work. Look at the stone any way, sir. Let a man travel through the centre of the earth, sir, and with that diamond on his finger, he'd want no light."

Trumps stood, his eyes fixed upon the stone. "I think 'tis too small for me," he ventured to observe.

"Try it, sir—try it—bless me!—well, you have a curiosity there,"—and Glitter raised his eyebrows and puckered his mouth, as he took up the silver seal-ring, laid down by Trumps.

"It was in our family," said Titus, a little abashed at the native vulgarity of the relic, brought

out in forcible contrast by the surrounding splendour. "Fits, I declare," said Trumps, placing the diamond ring on the finger, too long disgraced by the family treasure.

"Sir, I should be proud to sell you that ring, if I could afford it, at half price. As it is, I'll strike off five guineas."

Trumps looked at the ring, and with some anxiety, asked—"How much."

"As I said, sir," replied Glitter, "I'll let you have the ring cheaper than any gentleman I have ever clapped my eyes upon. And I'll tell you why, sir—you'll do especial credit to the ring. Now, there are some hands, that, upon my honour, sir, it goes to my heart to let my goods go upon; hands! did I say, sir,—lumps of flesh, with skin like sole-skin. It does I say go to my heart, to think of the pain and labour used to get the jewel from the mine—of the skill in cutting it—the taste and delicacy of setting a diamond as that is set—and after all, to be condemned to a hand, as red and as coarse as beef, sir! Upon my honour, sir, I do feel—but what can we do in business?—still I do feel that I am sometimes committing a sin in letting my goods go upon such fingers. May I never sell another stone, sir, if except his grace, the Duke of Marlborough—perhaps, for hands do run in families—perhaps, sir"—and Glitter placed his palms

flatly against each other, and almost brought his forehead to the counter—"perhaps, I have the honour of addressing a branch of that distinguished house?"

"No," said Trumps, in a soft, low voice.

"I declare, sir, by your hand—and I am accounted a tolerable judge in such matters—I should have thought you a younger brother—or"—

"How much?" said Trumps, looking wistfully at the ring.

"Well, sir, as this is our first transaction—and I hope, sir, for the honour of your countenance for many years to come—I—I'll try and say five-and-thirty guineas," said the obliging Glitter.

The face of Trumps darkened at the sum, and with a melancholy look, he was about to draw the desired gem from his finger. Glitter observed the act, and suddenly raised his hands.

"But as I said—to you, sir—and in favour of your hand, for I should feel my goods recommended by such fingers—I will venture to say, thirty guineas."

"It's very cheap, no doubt—very cheap," said the prudent Trumps, "but I fear at present—I—I fear I can't afford it."

"Ha! ha! excuse my freedom, sir—I can't help laughing—not afford? Ha, sir! had I your wealth—well, well—I mean, the prospects that a

gentleman like you must have in a town like this—pardon my freedom, sir,—the fortunes that many lovely women would be proud to lay at your feet—excuse my freedom, sir—but where merit is so apparent—excuse my freedom"—

"Thirty guineas," repeated Trumps, and still the ring remained upon his finger.

"As I'm an honest man, and a liveryman, sir, I sold the fellow of it to the Marquis of——but I'll not mention his name—for forty guineas. To be sure, the marquis has a hand like Magog; though, for all its size, it dips pretty deeply, sir—pretty deeply, we know where"—and Glitter winked.

"I can't afford it," said Trumps, and he put his thumb and finger to the ring and paused, as he caught the supplicating looks of the jeweller.

"Don't, sir, don't—I cannot bear to see you take it off in this shop. There—I'll say eight-and-twenty; and after that, as I'm a Christian, sir, I cannot speak again."

Trumps felt it would have been ungrateful in him to have rejected such complacency. He had, it was true, but thirty guineas. What of it? Could he not raise money upon his ten cottages? Besides, there were prospects, as the tradesman sagaciously declared, beaming brightly on him! The ring was moreover a necessary—nay, an indispensable ornament to a gentleman; especially so, in the felicitous

circumstances in which Trumps found himself. It was a mute, yet delicate and brilliant avowal of gentility. A diamond like that was at once an introduction and a certificate. He had, it was true, only thirty guineas—only thirty from the fifty, his small income for the year—for the three hundred and sixty-five dinners required by the human animal in twelvemonths; with all the other small essentials demanded by a sense of comfort and propriety. For a moment, he paused; and then Miss Wolfe, leaning on a silver anchor, rose before him; and he plunged his hand into his pocket, and drew therefrom all his coined treasure. He paid for the diamond ring, placed the silver seal-ring of the family in the lightened purse, and was about to quit the shop, when a sense of new wants fell upon him. "Could Mr. Glitter recommend a pair of knee-buckles?"

"The prettiest things ever made; not fifty pair been sold yet—and those to the nobility only; they were as yet scarcely out of the House of Lords." Such was the character, such the history, of a pair of blue steel buckles, set with tolerable paste.

"The stones are not real?" asked Trumps.

"No, sir; although they have the advantage of appearance. They look real, but between ourselves—I deceive no customer, sir—between our-

selves, they are not. But then, sir, with that diamond on your finger, who would suspect your knees?"

"That's very true," said Titus.

"If a gentleman's hand is the real thing, his knees may very safely be sham," declared the jeweller.

"Then these are very cheap?" for Trumps thought, with a passing pang, of his reduced store.

"Dirt," said Glitter, "a little two guineas."

"For false stones?" asked Trumps.

"They look real, sir, and we must always pay for appearance. Well, say thirty-five shillings. I tell you what—'tis only worth so much old silver; I'll take thirty, and the old seal-ring for the lot."

Trumps paid the money, surrendered the bit of family silver, and returned to his inn to dress. The cravat, ruffles, hat, and stick had been sent before, and awaited him in his bed-room; while he himself was the happy and important bearer of the diamond ring, and the paste knee-buckles.

Gentle reader, Trumps is at his toilette dressing for the lady of his hopes—the daughter of General Wolfe.

CHAPTER III.

In about two hours, Titus, arrayed as for a court, descended from his room. The waiters stared from the passage, the chambermaids hung over the banisters to catch a view of his departing skirts. His hair bore testimony to the skill of the barber—his cravat flowed gracefully and voluminously—his ruffles drooped in bunches over his hands—he carried his gold-headed cane as it were potent as the caduceus—his little finger glowed with the diamond ring—and his knees throbbed with a sense of new buckles. His hat, with broad gold loop, sat like a diadem upon his brow.

"Your bill, sir," said Robert, at the same time presenting that social annoyance.

"Oh! ha! I have changed my mind," that is, Titus had changed his guineas—"I—I shall come back."

"Then, we're not to send your luggage, sir?" asked the servant.

"Not to-day," replied Trumps, and stepping into the street, he turned to seek the abode of the daughter of General Wolfe. He had proceeded a very little way, when the eyes of the passengers convinced him that he was really too finely ap-

pointed to appear uncovered in the street— that an article so daintily set forth ought to be conveyed to its destination in a case. He therefore called a coach, and in sonorous tones, ordered the man to drive to —— square.

Many and hard were the blows of the knocker, moved by the sinewy hand of the coachman. The door of the desired house flew open, and a porter, with severe looks, questioned the manners of the disturber; "a hackney-coachman had no *right* to make such a noise;" thus looked the porter, whose stern face relaxed somewhat on the appearance of Trumps, who quietly suffered himself to be charged treble the fare, the coachman jocosely declaring that "the knock was worth half the money."

"My Lord, shall I take your card in to Sir Jeremy?" asked a footman.

"Certainly," and Titus put his hand into his pocket; though for what we are ignorant; for sure we are he had no card about him. Perhaps, he "hoped." Withdrawing his hand with nothing in it, he said, "Trumps, Mr. Titus Trumps." And the footman departed with the name of our hero to Sir Jeremy Sloth, whose custom it was to give audience to everybody who sought him; possibly, in the belief that nobody having suffered one interview, would have courage left for a second.

Sir Jeremy Sloth was a baronet, and had more-

over slept and voted in three parliaments. He knew very little of the constitution, but a great deal of heraldry. In his character of senator, he never gave his vote, but we believe after long and painful consideration; and as he was wont to complain that no time was allowed between the last speech on a question, and the division that decided it, he had always made up his mind to his vote long before the question came on. This was what he called getting in advance of the public business. And yet if Sir Jeremy had any fault, it was that he was a little dilatory—that he complained of customs and usages long established, as little other than novel innovations. "Men, it was plain, were in a hurry to bring about the end of the world, or they wouldn't go on so fast;" such was the cry of Sir Jeremy, when the broad-wheeled waggon gave place to the stage-coach. One incident will illustrate the constitution of Sir Jeremy. He was one day in company with a royal duke, when a sudden storm came on: our baronet stood at the window—the duke sat far in the room. "Quite a storm, Sir Jeremy," said the duke. "It is, indeed," said the baronet. "Bless my heart!" exclaimed Sir Jeremy, "may it please your Royal Highness, if not too great a trouble, to come a little this way to the window to look at this—flash of lightning!"

Titus Trumps stood before Sir Jeremy Sloth, a short, slim, dry little man, constantly at work upon his dignity, in order as he vainly thought to make the most of it. With many slow flourishes of the hand, Sir Jeremy waved Titus into a seat. There was a silence of two minutes, and for any movement of the baronet, the pause might have continued. Titus hoped Sir Jeremy would speak first: at length, our hero opened the sitting by modestly observing—"Sir Jeremy, my name is Trumps." The baronet acknowledged the intelligence by a grave inclination of the head. "My name is Trumps," repeated Titus.

"Tromp?" asked the baronet, in a voice that almost chilled even the blood of our sanguine friend,—"Tromp?"

"—*umps*," said Titus, emphatically correcting the termination.

"Pardon me," said Sir Jeremy, with a sickly smile, "I thought, possibly, a descendant of the famous Dutch Admiral."

Titus was evidently struck by the words of the baronet; it had never occurred to him before: he might be a descendant, and still be ignorant of the honourable fact.

"Not a descendant?" asked the baronet, looking grimly at the perplexed Titus.

"Really, Sir Jeremy, I—I cannot take it upon me to say—such liberties are taken with names, that"—

"Right, sir; very right,"—for Sir Jeremy was upon his favourite theme—"for my part, I know not if I would not as severely punish offences against names as against the person."

"A name, Sir Jeremy, is often the best part of a man," said Titus.

"Very often," replied the baronet, with emphasis. He then returned to the introductory declaration of his visitor. "Your name is Trumps? Well, sir, so far we understand each other."

"I—I arrived in London last night," proceeded Trumps, the baronet strangely enough unmoved by the intelligence. Trumps added with significance, bowing, and exhibiting his teeth with a smile,—"by the coach, Sir Jeremy."

"A romantic occurrence," said the sarcastic baronet. "Inside or out?"

"Really, Sir Jeremy, I am proud to say—very proud to say,—out." And again Trumps smiled.

"Your name is Trumps—you came to town by the coach—and you are proud to say outside,"—slowly summed up Sir Jeremy.

"And I—I felt it my duty to pay my respects at this house, without loss of time. I hope the young lady is quite well?" and Trumps smiled again.

"Do I understand, Mr. Trumps, that your visit here is for the sole object of inquiring into the condition of the health of"——

"Exactly, Sir Jeremy—exactly," cried Titus, impatient of the slow verbosity of the baronet. "I feared she might have caught cold."

"You are not an apothecary, Mr. Trumps?" asked Sir Jeremy, and every second he grew more dignified.

"No, sir," replied Titus, with a gasp.

"Then, sir, may a strange and humble individual like myself, venture to ask what you are?" drawled Sir Jeremy.

Trumps was frozen by the unlooked-for chilliness of the baronet, and, after some hesitation, replied, essaying another smile,—"Nothing."

"Nothing!" echoed Sir Jeremy.

"That is," quickly rejoined Trumps—"a gentleman." Saying which, Trumps felt himself exhausted. He had expected to be welcomed, embraced by a delighted circle, and he sat in the drawing-room of Sir Jeremy Sloth, as in a snow house.

"And you are intimate with the young lady in whose health you have shown so kind an interest; is it not so, Mr. Trumps?" inquired the baronet."

"I—I may say, that I was happy in being able to show some attention, which"——

"Which she accepted?" asked Sir Jeremy with unusual celerity.

"Which she did me the honour most graciously to accept," replied Trumps.

"Out of town, perhaps?" inquired the baronet.

"Precisely, Sir Jeremy—precisely," and Trumps tried to laugh.

Sir Jeremy stretched his hand towards the bell—drew it back—then rose, and addressing his visitor as if addressing "the House," the honourable baronet was understood by our hero to say,—"Mr. Titus Trumps, gentleman, may I solicit of you the courtesy of remaining in this apartment until my return?"

Trumps felt abashed at the ceremonious request of the baronet, and slightly colouring, replied—"Certainly."

Sir Jeremy Sloth walked leisurely as a ghost in armour from the room, and Titus, with all his constitutional sprightliness, felt somewhat melancholy. He heard footsteps, and he almost hoped that it was the footman come to twirl him into the street. And then, his eye fell upon his diamond ring, and he became assured of respectful consideration. The baronet had been cold, certainly; perhaps, however, it was the custom of the baronetage to be a little frigid.

The door opened, and showed Sir Jeremy Sloth

leading in a lady with as much grace as if about to commence a minuet. Trumps rose from his chair, and wished to smile.

"Emily," thus spoke Sir Jeremy Sloth to the lady, who betrayed some confusion as her eyes met the handsome face, and glanced at the goodly figure of our hero—"Emily, I presume I introduce you to an old acquaintance?"

"Papa!" The lady was neither very young nor very handsome: she was trembling on the verge of thirty—(bosom friends declared she had long since gone over),—and was thin as a mortified nun: indeed, she was one of those useful persons in this world of temptation, whose very looks preach abstinence. Still, it was either the surprise of the introduction to Titus, or his features, or form, or both or all these together, that sent a passing look of interest to the face of Miss Sloth: for a moment, she looked like an old picture revived. "Papa!" said Miss Emily Sloth, and fluttered and blushed.

"Mr. Trephonius Trumps"—began Sir Jeremy—

"Titus," was the brief correction of our hero.

"Mr. Titus Trumps," and Sir Jeremy bowed an acknowledgment of his error. Then, turning to the lady,—"Mr. Titus Trumps is, as he assures me, not an apothecary; yet has he bestowed upon us the favour of this visit for the express purpose of inquiring into the condition of your health."

INTRODUCTION OF TITUS TRUMPS TO "MISS WOLFE."

"I trust, Sir Jeremy—I"—poor Titus was confounded by the mistake—"I hope, that the young lady is well,—but, I—the truth is, Sir Jeremy, that is not the young lady, I—no, Sir Jeremy,—not the young lady."

"I understood, sir, that you spoke of my daughter, and being anxious to"——

"No, Sir Jeremy, no;" Trumps endeavoured to smile very blandly, "I meant, the daughter of the —the late general."

"Late general?" and Sir Jeremy slowly chewed the words.

"Of the hero—the"—and then Trumps made a last effort, and drawing himself up, said very distinctly—"the daughter of General Wolfe."

"General Wolfe, sir? In my house?—Were you informed that such a lady lived here?"

"Yes, sir; I understood at the inn, where we put up"——

"Inn, sir? What inn?" asked the baronet haughtily.

"The Flower-Pot," replied Titus with great humility.

"And I am to understand, sir, that you came from the—the Flower-Pot?" and to the dismay of Trumps, he thought he saw a contemptuous smile on the face of Emily as her father spoke. "From" —the baronet paused to leer at the smart clothes

of his visitor—"From the Flower-Pot? You look like it."

Titus was about to answer, when the baronet authoritatively held up his hand, and then proceeded to put poor Trumps to the question. "There is something in your air, your demeanour, Mr. Trumps, that demands from me immediate attention."

Trumps, astonished at the sudden civility of the baronet, pressed his hat between his hands, and bowed.

"Will you tell me from what place you come?"

"Cirencester," said Trumps, "last night."

"Cirencester," said Emily to herself, and, a second afterwards, rang the bell.

"And the lady, who"—the baronet was interrupted by the appearance of the footman, who crossed to Miss Emily, and took her commands—"and the lady"——repeated Sir Jeremy, as the servant left the room.

"The lady, sir, whom I thought your relative, was in the stage-coach."

"My relative—in—in a stage-coach!" cried Sir Jeremy: had Trumps said the pillory, the assertion had not been more offensive.

"Inside;" replied Trumps, "for it was very wet, Sir Jeremy, and it was my good fortune to see Miss Wolfe"——

"Miss Wolfe!" exclaimed the baronet.

"Yes, papa," said Miss Sloth, tittering, "I assure you, the daughter of"——

"That is the lady," cried Titus, as the door opened and he caught the face of his fair fellow-passenger, who coloured when she saw him, then curtsied respectfully to Miss Sloth, and then played with her apron-strings. The curtsey and the dress of the girl smote the heart of our hero.

"Young woman," said Sir Jeremy sternly, "do you know this person?" and the baronet pointed one finger at Titus as he would have pointed at a cur suspected of insanity.

"The gentleman came in the coach with me, Sir Jeremy, and it was very wet, and he was very kind," said the girl.

"Kind! young woman, I am afraid you have given yourself a false character," cried the baronet.

"I, Sir Jeremy! La! Sir Jeremy;" and the girl burst into tears.

"Pray, young woman, what do you know of General Wolfe?" asked her master with a terrible frown.

"My father keeps it, that's all," sobbed the maiden.

"Keeps it!" cried Trumps and the baronet, Miss Sloth biting her lips to suppress her laughter.

"It *was* the Jackdaw and Pitcher, but—but"—

"But,—what? Speak!" called out Sir Jeremy.

"But Sergeant Flam said he'd recruit at the house, if father would alter the sign, so he had 'em painted out, and the General painted in. False character! I'm sure, Sir Jeremy, if that gentleman has said anything that a gentleman should be ashamed of saying,"——

"Permit me, Sir Jeremy—I—there is no blame to be attached to the young woman, I assure you," and Titus, utterly confounded, played with his hat, and breathed hard, and stared in the face of Sir Jeremy Sloth, and hoped that the floor would open. Sir Jeremy made no answer, when, at length, Trumps exclaimed, with energy—"It's my stupidity—I see it all,—my stupidity. Good morning, Sir Jeremy—altogether, my stupidity."

With this full and candid avowal, Titus Trumps vanished from the apartment, and made his way into the street.

"A pickpocket, no doubt," said Sir Jeremy Sloth. "The fellow has the look of a pickpocket —the—what! eh! gone? God bless me! Why didn't I send for a constable?"

CHAPTER IV.

"VERY odd—strange mistake," said Titus to himself, as he trod his way back to the Flower Pot. "Very odd: but Miss Sloth, though not a very, very lovely girl, looks amiable; and she smiled and —General Wolfe! Ha! ha! After all, if it even had been so, soldiers' daughters are generally no great prizes. Now, Sir Jeremy is very rich; has the air of it—seems stiff and hard with gold. His daughter is, no doubt, an only child. Ha! ha! it was devilish odd—but good must come of it; yes, something must be sure to turn up."

With these hopeful thoughts, Titus Trumps returned to the Flower Pot. "We didn't send your luggage, sir," said the waiter.

"Certainly not—I told you not to send," replied Titus, shocked for the moment at the recollection of his morning hopes. Trumps retired to his room: he had no sooner closed the door upon himself, than he felt his utter loneliness. He was about to assume his ordinary dress—to take off the suit donned for Miss Wolfe. How his heart sank as his fingers touched his knee-buckles! He rose, and walked to and fro; then went to his window—found himself unconsciously counting opposite rows

of tiles—coughed—whistled, and—sat down again. Intently brooding on the features and fortune of Miss Sloth, Titus heard not, for some time, the waiter's knuckles smiting the chamber-door. At length, startled from the baronet's daughter, Trumps cried, "come in."

"Do you dine at home to-day, sir?" asked the waiter, with a simper.

"Dine—eh?—why, let me see," and Trumps unconsciously paused to consider if by so doing he should break an appointment—"yes—I think—to-day." Whether duke, marquis, or earl might feast him on the morrow, Trumps knew not; but he had some small hopes.

"Alone?" asked the waiter.

"Eh? why"—the word came upon Titus like a snow-ball. Alone—dine alone in—London! He had looked to be welcomed to twenty boards. He had, it was true, no acquaintance in the metropolis, yet, with an amiable readiness to make friends in any number, and at the shortest notice, it was hard upon him that he should chew in solitude. "Yes—I think—alone," said Titus; quickly adding—"that is,—to-day." New friends, like new flies, might swarm to-morrow.

Again, Titus thought to disrobe, when, on new consideration, he thought it best to remain in his state dress. He might, after dinner, go to the play,

and then and there something might happen. He quitted his room, and as he descended the stairs, observed, with some complacency, the attention he awakened in the household. The maids, with new eagerness, peeped out to look at him—the waiters whispered one another as he passed—the landlady and the landlady's daughter smiled very significantly, yet, as he thought, very graciously. A masculine face—as Trumps imagined, not altogether strange to him—looked suddenly from a corner, and was as suddenly withdrawn.

"When do you dine, sir?" asked Straight, the civilest of waiters, as Trumps seated himself.

"Can't I dine now?" questioned Titus.

"Now, sir," echoed Straight, and stood still and stared at Trumps.

"Have you nothing for dinner?" asked our hero.

"Nothing, sir," mechanically answered Robert; who then bethought himself—"beg pardon—anything," and went to an opposite corner of the room, where three persons sat with that peculiar seriousness in their faces, that betokens expectation of dinner. Robert bent to one of them—muttered a few syllables—jerked his head in the direction of Trumps, accompanying the motion with the words, "perfect gentleman—look at buckles." There was a short pause whilst the parties communed with one

another, when Robert, with a backsliding bow, quitted the party, and returned to Trumps. "Can dine with party," said Robert, pointing to the triumvirate.

"Are they gentlemen?" asked Trumps.

"Gentlemen," cried the immoveable Robert.

"They don't look much of the gentlemen," said Titus.

"Don't look," said the laconic Straight.

"Merchants, probably?" was the supposition of Trumps.

"Merchants," replied Robert.

"Ha! and they are generally very simple in their dress," observed Trumps.

"Very simple," said Straight, and then, with an extraordinary prodigality of words, added—"goose for dinner."

"Either of them in the Turkey trade?" asked Trumps, the question, as we think, suggested to him by Robert's brief notice of goose.

"Turkey trade," pronounced the unconscious Robert, "with apple sauce."

Trumps would, we think, have continued the colloquy, had he not scented the odour of the coming bird. He rose as he snuffed the aroma, and advanced to the party. Making a most painstaking bow, Titus Trumps observed that, "being a perfect stranger to the gentlemen, he felt par-

ticularly honoured at having been so readily admitted to their circle. It was an honour that even a prince need not hesitate to accept at the hands of English merchants."

The individuals thus courteously addressed, stared suspiciously at the visitor, and then, as he prepared himself to take a seat, looked at one another. Had Titus observed the faces and gestures of his new company, he would have doubtless thought it very strange that one English merchant should wink and thrust his tongue in his cheek—that the second merchant should purse up his mouth and twitch the elbow of the third commercial man of the British Isles—who should strangely enough acknowledge the action, by bending with the tip of his finger the tip of his nose.

"Bob, you've more goose?" asked one of the merchants, with gaping mouth, and looks of great anxiety.

"More goose," answered Robert, who for once replied to a question with a perfect comprehension of its import; for there *was* more goose.

"I do think, Mr. Chattels," said a second merchant, in a snuff-brown coat, with huge pockets, and a mustard-coloured shag waistcoat, "I do think a goose is the best thing as flies."

"A goose is the bird of paradise incog," answered

Chattels, with authority, and considerable emphasis on the last word.

"What's incog, Chattels?" asked the third merchant.

"Why, it was his lordship who called—you know Lord Maudle, him as I sold that 'Mother and Child' to"?—said Chattels to the second trader.

"I beg your pardon—but did the transaction take place in England—was his lordship in?——" Trumps was proceeding in his query.—

"At that time his lordship was in Indy," answered merchant Chattels.

"I apprehend," observed Trumps with great politeness; "yes—yes," he thought in silence—"blacks—slaves—but a strange bargain to speak of."

"I think I do know him," cried Mr. Hammer, the second merchant—"and I think, Mr. Chattels, considering all that passed in that affair, you might, before me at least, have held your tongue about that 'Mother and Child.'"

"Come, come," said Goings, the third and last merchant—"no old sores. In the way of business like ours, what's one 'Mother and Child' to squabble about?"

"I perceive," communed Trumps with himself—"all great slave-holders: a strange business, but,"

and he looked at his associates, with new charity—"but, doubtless, very profitable."

"Was it his lordship as called the goose with sage and onions, paradise incog?" asked Goings, seeing his friend Hammer become moody at certain recollections. "Was it his lordship who?"——

"Damn his lordship, yes, and the goose too," cried Chattels, and with at least half the skeleton of the bird upon his plate, he flung in another bone, and called Bob "to take away."

"Gentlemen, on a day like this ought we to quarrel?" It was Mr. Goings who, on his legs, looked about him as he put the question—"Quarrel,—and before a stranger, too?"

"Never mind me—no ceremony before me," cried Trumps, with ill-timed suavity.

"When we have done so well to-day—when we have hung together, as we always ought—and have kept out all buyers, and have got things at our own money—why, to quarrel after such a day's work as this, what is it but flying in the face of providence?" Thus spoke Mr. Goings.

"Well, I've done, Daniel," said Hammer—"only, whenever I hear or think of that 'Mother and Child,' it makes my blood *bile*. I don't know how it is, I'd a liking for the article. But I've done."

"Article," thought Titus—"how habits of com-

merce influence the language of a man! A mother and child—an article!"

Titus Trumps, in his simplicity, thought his companions discoursed of live negroes—of breathing black flesh and blood: he looked upon them as vendors of real bones and muscles, when, in truth, they traded only in the painted likenesses of gods and goddesses, men, women, and children. They were not slave-merchants, they were only picture-brokers. The dinner they were met to consume, had been ordered to dignify the triumph of the day. They had scented a sale of valuable property at Bow, and had carried off, at their own penny, the choicest of the "articles."

CHAPTER V.

"COME sir,—what shall we say for you?" asked Chattels, pushing the bottle towards Trumps.

"Gentlemen," replied our hero, filling—"here is security to property, at home and abroad," and Trumps thought that he had touched, with happy delicacy, on the human goods of the company assembled.

"Sir, you are a gentleman, and not a bit less—it's sentiment as shows the man," declared Hammer, waxing drunk. "The man as wants respect for

property, would kill his father," and Hammer glared from under his eyebrows at the tranquil Chattels.

"Damn metaphysics," exclaimed the serious Goings, "let's be jolly. Come, gentlemen, I'll give you a toast that touches us all. May th' *harts* flourish!" Now Goings had a peculiar interest in the toast, having, as he felt assured, picked up within the week a superb Corregio for one and sixpence.

"Mr. Goings," cried Chattels, hungry for knowledge—"what may be metaphysics?"

"Why, this, sir," bellowed Hammer, clenching his raised fist, "metaphysics is the sacredness of property: metaphysics is the right every man has in any thing—even in a 'Mother and Child,' sir; yes, a 'Mother and Child:'" saying which, Hammer laid his arms upon the table, and gazed like a pointer at Chattels.

Chattels was a philosopher; for tranquilly, and in the blandest tones, he observed, "Thank you, Mr. Hammer, for the information."

"But, gentlemen, we have forgotten the toast,—"May the arts flourish!" interrupted Trumps.

"And every man keep his own 'Mother and Child,'" added the perturbed spirit of Hammer.

Luckily, at this critical moment, the waiter

entered the room, and approached the table—"Person desired to see Mr. Trumps."

Trumps jumped up, crying—"Not from the baronet's?" for hope was alive again, and would speak.

"Baronet's," answered Robert.

"Oh! pray let the gentleman come in—make no stranger of us—show him in, Bob," cried Chattels, who, with his companions, felt a sudden deference for Mr. Trumps. "He's very young, and may be a customer," was the disinterested thought of Chattels, and perhaps not of him alone.

It was with great difficulty, that Trumps was prevailed upon to remain. But he sat in a corner, and Chattels, with a smile, held him down. Already, Titus saw a missive from Miss Sloth—already, read the hour of assignation. He thought something would be sure to happen—yes, he knew something would turn up.

Trumps had just assured himself of his good fortune, when the messenger "from the baronet's" entered. Titus at once recognised in him the young man who had spirited away "Miss Wolfe" in the hackney-coach: he saw it—the man was of the household; perhaps, the secretary of the baronet, and bore a letter from Miss Sloth. She might have selected a more prudent person, for his face

was flushed with liquor, his cravat disordered, and he slid along the floor as though his soles were buttered.

"What! Frank—master Pink—glad to see you," cried Chattels, and made way for the visitor, who was evidently no stranger to the merchants.

"Gentlemen, I'm your's," said Pink, with a hiccup, tumbling in a heap in a chair, and after peering round, fixing his eyes on Trumps, who smiled and nodded, whilst Pink stared and chuckled.

"And how—how is the excellent Sir Jeremy?" asked Goings.

"Well enough for an old 'un," answered Pink; then looking at Titus—"I believe your name is Trumps?"

"How imprudent!" thought Titus, "to send such a messenger;" then aloud,—"Yes, friend."

"Friend! Come—ha! ha!—well, that's easy."

"If you have any communication to make"—and Trumps rose.

"I have then, I can tell you," said Sir Jeremy Sloth's valet, for Pink was no less a functionary.

"This way, then"—and Titus tried to vacate his corner.

"Not a bit of it; all in good time, Mr. Trumps. The lady upon whose business, I"——

"Hush! for heaven's sake, sir—consider—deli-

cacy—pray be silent," and Trumps was in agony for the reputation of the baronet's daughter.

"As for delicacy, Mr. Trumps, I hope I know what that is, as well as any man—but I choose it in its proper place and season.—Gentlemen," and Mr. Pink prepared to drink to the company an universal toast—"here's luck."

"Bravo!" cried Goings, "that's a toast after my own heart—there's no politics, no party in it; its a toast for saints and pickpockets."

"There's nothing like being prepared with a general sentiment; for there's no knowing what company a man may fall into," said the wise lacquey, "what say ye, eh?" and he shook the snoring merchant, Jacob Hammer.

"The greatest rogue unhanged, that Chattels," snorted the sleeping dealer.

"Ha! ha!" laughed the apologetic Chattels—"he's only dreaming."

"Made away with 'Mother and Child'—sell his father," growled Hammer.

"Wonderful, how true some people dream," said Pink, grinning at Chattels, who gulped his wine.

"Now, now, sir—if you please"—and Trumps made his way from the table, and touched the valet on the shoulder.

"Wait for me in the street, and—and I'll join you," said Mr. Pink.

"In the street! No, no; in my room," urged the hopeful Trumps.

"Rather not, sir; for its very important what I have to say to you—and—therefore—in the street," and the valet spoke like a man not to be denied.

Trumps quitted the room, and obediently sought the street. As he walked up and down, he began to calculate the expenses of running away with an heiress—the ready money required to incorporate the maiden flesh of his flesh. Let the worst happen, he had his diamond ring; that would do something; besides, there were his cottages; and, more than all, there was his indulgent and mysteriously wealthy aunt. It was true, Miss Sloth might not be an heiress; she might be dependent upon the baronet—he might prove inexorable. No matter; "the first thing," said Titus to himself, "the first thing is to secure the girl. When—when I have married her, something will be sure to turn up."

Whilst Titus was treading the street, walking in an imaginary paradise, Chattels was pressing the wine upon Pink, with whose master the man of pictures had had many profitable dealings. "And how—how is the excellent Sir Jeremy?"

"How does he like my 'Joseph and his Bre-

thren'—ha!—he had it a bargain—how does he like it?" asked Goings.

"Liked it better than anything—gave it away," answered Pink.

"Gave it away—that beautiful picture!—gave away Joseph 'and his Brethren?'" exclaimed Goings.

"You don't know what a good man, Sir Jeremy is," drawled the valet, "gave it to the parish church of Farisee, just before the last election."

"What a sacrifice!" cried Goings.

"Not at all," replied the politic Pink, "for I've no manner of doubt that every one of the 'brethren' got Sir Jeremy ten plumpers. I've heard some of the members call the baronet Sir Benjamin—ha! ha!—because he was the chosen of Joseph!"

"And my 'Leda and Swan'—that beautiful jewel—the baronet ha'n't given away that?" asked Chattels, with more than ordinary anxiety.

"Bless your heart, no—what do you take him for? You know he bought it because the lady's face was so like his dear grandmother's. Don't you remember?" asked the valet.

"I—I think I do" answered Chattels, for once taking his memory on trust.

"And he's so fond of it,—ha! there's few such grandsons in these wicked times—he's so fond of it, that, would you believe it, Mr. Chattels, he's had

the lady and the swan gloriously framed, and hung in his own bed-room? Ha! though I'm obliged to live by 'em, the nobility ar'n't what they used to be—few baronets would think of their grandmothers like Sir Jeremy. Ten o'clock—I must go to Mr. Trumps."

"Oh! what is he?" asked Chattels. "A man of wealth?"

"Great fool," replied the valet.—"I've a little matter of business with him, and so—good night, gentlemen—good—good night"—and Mr. Pink staggered along the room, clenching and opening his hands, and muttering, and smiling bitterly at his own fierce thoughts. He reeled into the street, and coming upon Titus, grappled his arm. Hooking himself upon our hero, he gave the word—"All right; march."

"But—but what have you to say to me?—or have you a letter,—or?"——

"All right—come along," cried the valet, becoming every moment more stupid. He rolled on, holding fast of Titus, who, after some minutes, recurred to the subject at his heart. Making a resolute stop, whilst the valet ineffectually tugged at his arm to pull him onward, Trumps thus addressed his companion. "My friend,"—said Titus.

"You be d——d," grunted Mr. Pink, but in so low a note that it escaped the ear of Trumps.

"My friend,—that there may be no mistake, let us understand each other. Do you come to me respecting a lady at the house of Sir Jeremy?"—

"I do," answered the valet quickly, and truly, he being the betrothed of the daughter of "the General Wolfe." Pink repeated—"I do."

"Do you bring a letter?"—inquired Titus with trepidation.

"By no means," replied Mr. Pink—"no letter in the business. Come along," and with sudden force, he pulled Trumps on; who, after a moment's reflection, suffered himself to be carried away, hoping that the valet had been charged to bring him to an interview with the dear expecting fair one. After a silence of some minutes, Trumps was resolved to end all doubt, by putting a plain question: "Did the lady desire you to bring me to her?"

"What—what lady?" asked the valet, and he suddenly stopt, and stared at Trumps.

"What lady? why,—hem!—Miss Sloth?"—answered Titus. The valet checked a violent desire to laugh,—chuckled—slapt his leg, as if welcoming a brilliant thought, then crowed out,—"Well, you are a lucky fellow!" Titus felt satisfied that all was right, and proceeded on, the valet still hanging on his arm, shaking as he staggered, with suppressed merriment.

"And where—where are we to meet? At her father's house?" Trumps ventured to inquire.

"You don't think that would be quite right, do you?" asked Mr. Pink. "I say, sir—when you're married, won't you want a butler?"

"No doubt—no doubt. But where are we to meet?—it's getting very late," said Trumps.

"Not at all. Ladies of fashion never run away before midnight; a minute sooner, would be very low," was the assurance of the valet. "Sir Jeremy is very rich, he can't live long."

"He shall be buried like a sultan," cried Trumps, with animation.

"Do you like shooting, sir? Ha! such sport at our country seat in Wilts—such a plenty of game, if afraid of fire-arms, you may kill with your walking-stick."

"But, my good friend, does the lady propose to go off to-night?"—for even Trumps thought Miss Sloth a little precipitate.

"She told her maid—bless you, she's in the secret—she told General Wolfe's daughter—ha! ha! ha!" And here Mr. Pink gave himself up to mirth, and roared with laughter.

"Go on, there," cried a misanthropic watchman from a box. "Go on."

Pink had, generally, a proper respect for the authorities of the land; but in the present instance,

he was certainly deficient in the duties of a citizen; for, instead of complying with the desire of the officer of the peace, he turned and laughed defyingly in his teeth. The watchman was a choleric man; he huddled himself out of his box, and ran at the offender; but Pink, with the good fortune that is said ever to attend on drunkenness, escaped the hand of the watchman, at the same time, visiting the hat of that individual with a playful blow. The watchman, however, was not the man to take a jest in its true spirit, but with his hat over his eyes, furiously dealt his staff about him. That implement was manufactured of the choicest lance-wood, and coming in violent contact with the unsuspecting skull of Trumps, at the time hoping to mollify his reckless assailant, laid our hero flat upon the stones. The whirling rattle of the conqueror called a dozen watchmen to survey the fallen. Bleeding and almost senseless, Trumps was lifted up, the injured functionary rapidly enumerating the thousand insults that had been put upon him.

Trumps put his hand to his head and, the blood trickling through his fingers, benevolently gasped —"My good friend,—I—I—I only hope you mayn't be hanged for this."

"Hanged! Ha! ha! as if a watchman *could* go beyond manslaughter," observed one of the fraternity—"but Starlight," such was the name of

the outraged officer—"didn't you say there was two?"

"Yes,—but this was the rioter," answered Starlight, fixing his hand in the collar of Trumps. "The other's gone peaceably to bed: bring him along," and Titus, with the customary solemnity, was escorted to the watch-house.

Though Starlight was mistaken in the person of the offender, he was pretty correct in his intelligence of the purpose of the absent Mr. Pink. He had gone home to bed, perfectly satisfied with the situation in which he had left his innocent, yet too hopeful rival, for whose punishment he had sought the Flower Pot, where, to the infinite amusement of the whole household, he had, getting drunk the while, narrated the meeting of Titus that morning with the punctilious Sir Jeremy. Had he found Trumps obstinate or impatient in the matter of Miss Wolfe, her lover had determined to thrash him: finding him, however, full of hopes, he was content to leave him as he was.

CHAPTER VI.

The appearance of Titus Trumps, pale, bruised and bleeding, was in itself sufficient to convince the constable of the night that our hero was some des-

perate offender. No respectable man could appear in such a place with a broken head.

"Now, watchman, what's this?" asked the judge of the watch-house.

"Permit me, sir, to state that there was never a more wanton,"—began Trumps.

"Silence," growled the constable, "let me hear the watchman," and the obedient Trumps stood silently sopping the blood from his skull with his handkerchief, his cravat and ruffles being dabbled with gore.

"I was calling the hour, Mr. Constable, and had my eye upon my lanthorn, when this person," and Starlight shook his head at Trumps, "came behind me, and without saying a word, knocked me inhumanly on the crown of my hat. And when I remonstrated with him, he called me a d——d old glowworm, and said he'd kick the very light out of me. Saying which, sir, he lifts up his leg, to assault the lanthorn; when he loses his balance, and falling on the corner of a stone, as you see, grazes his eye." Thus spoke Starlight, and rarely had even a watchman shown greater powers of invention.

"What have you to say to this? Speak!" cried the constable of the night. "I see—not a word in defence."

Trumps was tongue-tied, not with guilt, but

astonishment. Never mind, he thought—something will come of it—something must turn up. He then, to the great indignation of the presiding constable, and the body of watchmen assembled, proceeded to state that every word uttered by Starlight was a most flagrant and malicious lie.

"Yes—yes, of course; people in your situation, —by the way, what's your name? Trumps, eh? Titus Trumps? Ha! ha! A very good name. Pray, has Mr. Trumps turned up before?" asked the constable, and the watchmen shouted at the pleasantry.—When their humour had subsided, each public guardian took a wary view of Titus, but would not venture positively to assert that he was a known offender. "And pray, sir, what—what are you?" asked the constable of Trumps.

"A—gentleman," replied Titus with vehemence.

"That's enough; you must find bail for the assault—lock him up,"—said the constable.

"But, sir—I insist—I"—exclaimed Trumps furiously.

"This way," cried a familiar of the watch-house, and ere he was well aware of the motion, Titus Trumps—who was at midnight to carry off the daughter of Sir Jeremy Sloth—was abruptly transferred to a dark and noisome den: his heart sank as the lock turned.

"Perhaps, however—perhaps, the servant had

fled to inform Miss Sloth of her lover's disaster, and would return and obtain his release. Oh! yes—he was not to be left there all night; and at such an eventful time—no, something would happen—something must turn up." Comforting himself with this thought, Titus groped about his gaol for a seat. Stooping and stretching his hand out, he became suddenly, but not pleasantly, aware of the presence of a fellow-prisoner, for in the darkness he obtruded his fingers into the open mouth of the sleeping captive, stretched at length on a bench. "Hallo!" exclaimed Titus, as he withdrew his fingers from the mouth of his neighbour, who startled by their sudden introduction, had almost made his teeth meet in them. "Ugh!" cried Trumps, and wrung his wounded fingers in the dark.

"Want to steal my teeth?" asked the awakened prisoner.

"Silence! there," roared a voice from without, and a staff struck the iron-covered pannel. "Silence!"

"I—I beg your pardon," said Titus to his unseen companion. "I hope, I hav'n't hurt you?" and still Trumps wrung his fingers.

"Ha! sir," said the man, touched by the tones and manner of Trumps, "I am sure you wouldn't hurt anybody—much less a poor wretch like me. Would you believe it, I hav'n't had a bit of meat these six days?"

"I—I can easily believe it," said Trumps, tenderly pressing his fingers.

"What—what have you done?" asked the man, and with such apparent solicitude, that Trumps told him his whole story. As he proceeded, he felt the stranger advance closer on the seat.

"But I—I shall soon be bailed," said Titus.

"I hope to the Lord, you may, sir! Ha! sir, you have friends," and the stranger sighed.

"But what misfortune has brought you to this wretched place?" inquired Trumps.

"Ha! sir—it's all for asking for a little of my own, sir," replied the prisoner.

"Dear me! How, my good friend—how?"

"I—I am the son of a lord," said the man, and he groaned.

"God bless me!" exclaimed Trumps, smitten with sudden interest for his companion. "Really?"

"Really, sir.—His own son—born, sir, through a wedding-ring—if, I had money to get my right. At present, sir, my uncle has the title and the estates. Ha! sir—when I think of Diddledum Park,—and see myself a little boy in scarlet coat and breeches trimmed with gold, running after the fallow deer, and my own mother walking with my own father, with a star at his breast and a garter round his leg,—when I remember all this, and think where I now am,"—and again the stranger groaned.

"And your uncle," asked the simple Titus, "does he possess?"—

"All that should be mine. And for only stopping him in the street this afternoon, and asking him how he could serve his own flesh in blood in such a manner, he directly cries 'stop thief,' when, without knowing what I did, I ran away. I was caught, sir, when my cruel uncle—Oh! I know all he wants is to send me to the plantations—said I'd picked his pocket of his amber-box. But thank God! sir—it wasn't true, sir; no, sir—I defy him to prove it—for it wasn't found upon me. I own, I was a little up, but who could help it. I saw my uncle talking to General Bomby, a friend of my father's— ha! sir, if this was a place for laughing in I could make you laugh to tell you, what when I was a boy I used to call the general—but, to make short, sir, I saw my uncle offer a pinch from my father's own box, and perhaps, I was a little rash"—

"In language, you mean?" said Trumps.

"Nothing more, sir," said the wronged heir, "and then my uncle gets up a cry of 'stop thief,' and would you believe the wickedness of men,—but, sir, you're from the country, and don't know what men are in London,—would you believe, that in order to give a colour to the story, my barbarous relative flung my own dear father's amber box, gold mounted, with the arms of our family,

into a filthy gutter? My poor mother! She's out of this wicked world: all I hope is, she doesn't know I'm here."

"And is this really true?" asked Titus, affected by the earnestness of the injured man.

"True as this watch-house," replied the captive, with great fervour. "Ha! if I had but a friend, I'd share my fortune with him, when—when I got it."

"I—I will be your friend," cried the compassionate Trumps. "I will see that justice is done you,"—Titus felt strong in hope. Yes—he would be the happy means of restoring a wronged heir to his right,—would obtain his lasting gratitude—he would secure, that best of all worldly goods, a real friend.

"And will you—will you stand by me?"—cried the captive. "Oh! give me your hand; let me, dear, kind, generous stranger, press the hand of a noble friend." Saying this, the man sidled close to Trumps, caught his right hand, pressed it, and, not satisfied with that, lavished even more attention on the left. Titus was overpowered.

At this moment, the lock of the prison-door was turned, and an official voice cried out,—"Titus Trumps—a lady wants you."

"Ha! Miss Sloth—I knew she'd come," cried Titus, and was about to rush from the dungeon. A sense of the misfortunes of the remaining captive

made him pause. "Your name?" asked Titus hurriedly.

"Edgar—Edgar St. Evremond," answered the prisoner.

"Where—where shall I inquire for you?—speak," said Trumps. "Stay," he added. "My name is Trumps. Do you know the Flower Pot?"

"I shall get out to-morrow," said Edgar. "I'll be there," and the garish light flaring into the dungeon, the captive quickly turned away as if he loathed its beams.

"There, ma'am—is this the fellow?" Such was the question put by the constable of the night to a superbly dressed lady of a sacred age; that is,—of an age not to be touched upon.

"Oh, certainly not that gentleman,"—said the lady, and she curtsied and blushed, and then, as Trumps turned his head, and seeing the wound upon his temple, she exclaimed, almost with a shriek —"gracious heavens, sir! you are not hurt?"

"A very little," said Titus, with a smile of patience.

"Well, if he's not the thief,—you may go back again Mr. Trumps," cried the constable, and the dungeon-door was again unlocked.

"Thief!—thief!" roared Titus, and his honest indignation almost astounded the constable. "How dare you? What do you mean? I ask—how dare

you?"—and here Trumps trembled, and was speechless with rage.

"Why, the fact is this. This lady has been robbed at the playhouse by a good-looking fellow that sat next to her; and we—we paid the compliment to think it might be you. If so be, she doesn't identify you, why, you're all right."

"Many—many million pardons," said the lady. "I hope, sir, you will think me no party to—to the insult that"—and again the lady let her eyelids drop, put her hand to her bosom, and curtsied.

"Well, as you are not the gentleman wanted, Mr. Trumps, you had better—stop—there, you may sit down and warm yourself a little," and the constable directed the attention of Titus to an arm-chair in the chimney-corner. Titus did not reject the civility, and sat, meditating, seeing the face of Miss Sloth—who had *not* come—in the burning cinders, whilst the constable of the night prepared himself to receive from the lady—whose shoemaker he happened to be—a correct description of the play-house criminal.

Mrs. Sarah Anodyne gave, as the constable considered, a very hurried and imperfect account of the robber, and then, with feminine solicitude, sought to know the misfortunes of the very handsome gentleman in the chimney-corner. "What is the charge?" asked Mrs. Anodyne, in a low, anxious voice.

"Drunkenness and riotous conduct," answered the constable, with the air of a man quite accustomed to the indiscretion.

"Is that all?" exclaimed the lady; and though she doubtless rejoiced at the lightness of the offence, she seemed to speak as one disappointed.

"Nearly murdered a watchman," continued the constable.

"Nothing more?" coldly observed Mrs. Anodyne.

"That's all we know at present," remarked the watch-house Rhadamanthus, "but between you and me, ma'am, I think a good many things will come out."

"He's very good-looking," said the lady, with a side-long glance at the hopeful Titus.

"Shouldn't wonder if he turns up a tip-top highwayman," was the opinion of the constable.

"Remarkably handsome," said Mrs. Anodyne.

"Shouldn't be surprised if he had a hand in stopping the Derby mail."

"Extremely prepossessing," exclaimed the lady.

"The guard received a ball in the shoulder—isn't expected to live."

"Oh! a perfect gentleman"—concluded the admiring female: then, turning quickly to the constable, Mrs. Anodyne said with great earnestness, "My dear Mr. Pump—you must do me one little favour—let the gentleman out."

"Do anything to oblige you, ma'am,—so if you like to bail him,"—

"I! a stranger!" exclaimed Mrs. Anodyne. "I mean"—so little does sympathizing woman reflect on the stern duty of a night constable—"I mean—let him slip."

"Couldn't ma'am—got a name in the parish to lose. If, as I say, you like to be bail"—

"I! Mr. Pump—bail a stranger! He's evidently, a wild, thoughtless young man, and young men are too apt to misconstrue the humanity of women."

"Well, he seems to know nobody respectable," —said the constable.

"Dear young fellow!" involuntarily exclaimed Mrs. Anodyne.

"So I shall lock him up till the morning."

"Good night, Mr. Pump—good night; come, Frillwell," and Mrs. Anodyne hurriedly departed, accompanied by her matronly maid, who, we presume, in the double capacity of protector and companion, had attended her mistress to the theatre; and thence to give information of the robbery at the watch-house, where silent and motionless, she awaited her lady's further pleasure.

"Come, Mr. Titus Trumps, we can't let you roast there all night, like a chesnut," observed the night constable.

"You are sure nobody has inquired for me, Mr. Constable?" asked Titus, and Pump shook his head and pointed to the door of the dungeon. "It's

very odd—very odd, that nothing has yet turned up," and Trumps laid his hand to his bruised head.

The constable was about to command the return of the prisoner to his cell, when his eye caught the beckoning finger of the maid Frillwell, permitted by the suavity of a watchman to approach Mr. Pump, who gave an attentive ear to the whispers of the lady, and then impressed upon her as she was about to depart,—"Mind—good bail."

The purport of Mrs. Frillwell's speech we know not. We have, however, the pleasure to inform the reader, that Titus was suffered to brood at the fire over the probable advent of the baronet's daughter, and that scarcely a quarter of an hour had elapsed from the departure of Mrs. Frillwell, ere—the constable having first communed with a soft-spoken old lady—Trumps was told that a carriage was ready for him at the door.

"For me?" exclaimed the delighted Trumps.

"Yes—lady has bailed you," said the night constable.

"What lady? Was it"—Trumps was convinced it was Miss Sloth—"Was it"—

"The carriage waits, sir," said a footman, touching his hat with great humility to Trumps.

Titus paused for breath; the good fortune—though confidently expected—was, in its fullness, too much for him. He then thought of his black eye; no matter—perhaps, in a few minutes, 'twould

go off. Titus, bowing haughtily to the constable, quitted the watch-house.

"Buggins," wheezed a rheumatic, crooked watchman at the fire, leering contemptuously at the retiring figure of our hero, "Buggins,—see what it is to have a leg."

"Ha!" growled the watchman appealed to, "I only wish I was young and handsome, and had done a little bit o' murder."

Trumps mounted the carriage-steps as if ascending Jacob's ladder. The door was closed—the coachman cracked his whip—and away rolled our hopeful hero.

What is it—let us ask the reader—what is it that gives a peculiar charm, a new and subtle power to lutestring, rustling at dark midnight in the close confines of a carriage?—We humbly ask of sage experience to reveal the philosophy of the fascination; as for Titus Trumps, from head to foot, he trembled as he owned it.

And was Miss Sloth really in the carriage? Trumps was astounded—overcome by the benevolence of woman. He sat speechless and immoveable: again and again the lutestring rustled—when Titus seized an unresisting female hand, and with his own lips thanked his preserver.

Either the way was very short, or the horses the swiftest of their kind, for in about five minutes,

the carriage stopt. The door was opened; the footman briefly said, "sir, we're at home," and Titus descended from the vehicle. He gave his hand to the lady, whose face and figure were closely wrapt from the night air, and led her into the house.

"If—if she should have provided a parson," thought the sanguine Titus—"shall I—yes—I ought—I will marry her."

Trumps was conducted into a very handsome apartment, where an elegant supper was already served. Emotions of love, gratitude, hope, hunger, possessed him. He gave loose to his transports, and caught the fair one in his arms,—"I must—must gaze upon that lovely face—must"——

The lady, with silent dignity, revealed herself. Trumps started back—"In heaven's name!" he cried, "what are you?"

Any man, if left breath sufficient, would have put the same question: for when Trumps thought to behold his amiable heiress, he saw a yellow, painted old woman, grinning like a witch upon him. "Hag!" cried Trumps, with unusual fierceness—"hag!—beldame! what are you?"

The woman folded her arms, and making a low curtsey, said—"Your bail, Mr. Trumps."

Titus, smitten with a sense of his ingratitude, laid his hand upon his heart, and bowed as to a goddess.

CHAPTER VII.

Trumps left alone, eyed the supper: it was laid for two. "Yes—he saw it—Miss Sloth would come—it was plain enough—the old lady was her friend, and had acted by her direction. Miss Sloth *would* come!" And then Titus approached the glass and looked at his still blackening eye. "Perhaps,—perhaps, however, she wouldn't see it."

Trumps surveyed the appointments of the room: they were very rich—every thing in the best taste: the pictures very beautiful. Perhaps they sinned a little on the side of subject; what then?—they only exhibited the extreme innocence of the mind of the possessor.

"I am very sorry, indeed, Mr. Trumps, to have kept you waiting," said the old woman, entering the room, "but I was compelled to arrange my dress a little before supper."

"And is the second cover for *her?*" thought Trumps, and he looked towards the table. "I believe, madam—that is, knowing that I owe my liberty to you, I believe I"——

"Not entirely to me, Mr. Trumps," said the old woman. "There is another lady,—but—you see, everybody is not a housekeeper."

"May I not know my preserver?" asked Trumps.

"Never fear, Mr. Trumps; handsome young fellows like—dear heart! well, I'd forgot—how is your eye?"

"'Twill go off by the morning," said Titus. 'Will the lady come here to-night?"

"There, now—you men are so impatient! I think,—not to-night. Well, well, she's a silly woman," said Mrs. Cagely, such being her name. "A silly woman! she who might marry so well. She who"——

At this moment, the livery servant entered, and whispered to Mrs. Cagely. She suddenly put down her knife and fork. "Pray, sir," said the old lady, "continue your supper—some of my lodgers"——

"Lodgers!" cried Titus.

"That is, two or three gentlemen, unusually merry this evening,—I"——

"I beg your pardon, madam"—for Titus was resolved to be convinced,—"but do you know the family of Sir Jeremy Sloth?"

"Hush!" quickly cried the hostess, "at this moment—down stairs," and Mrs. Cagely tripped from the room with the vivacity of sixteen.

"She is here, then!" exclaimed Trumps—"I knew it—was sure of it."

Titus had scarcely uttered the words, when, to his astonishment, they were loudly repeated by a

gentleman on the stairs—"She is here—I know it —I'm sure of it!" cried a loud voice, and then Titus heard a scuffling, with the denials and entreaties of Mrs. Cagely, together with threats and masculine oaths.

"Can it be her father come hither in pursuit?" thought Titus, and as the thought struck him, the door was flung open, and three gentlemen apparently ripe from the tavern, reeled into the room, followed by Mrs. Cagely.

"I know she's here—I'll swear it"—roared one of the gentlemen, whilst the other two growled in their throats, and shook their fists.

"If you'll believe me, dear Mr. Sloth," cried Mrs. Cagely to the furious speaker, "dear Mr. Sloth"——

"I see it"—thought Trumps, "her brother!"

"I tell you, Mother Cagely," cried young Sloth, "I know she's here—and—I'll have her life."

"As I am an honest woman, Mr. Sloth"——

"I tell you what, Mrs. Cagely—no such protestations; if you must swear, respect our common sense. I know the girl's here," exclaimed young Sloth with rising violence—"she's here, and my honour's touched—I'll have her life."

Mrs. Cagely expressed herself again and again ready to swear upon anything, that the lady sought for was not in her house—that she knew nothing of

her, and further, that she wished to know nothing. The contest had continued some time when Trumps began to feel the insignificance of his situation: it was unmanly in him, he at length considered, to suffer the whole brunt of the fray to fall on the venerable Mrs. Cagely. At all events, he might champion her against the violence of the gentlemen, without compromising the name of his beloved Emily. So reasoning, he gathered himself up, and addressed his hostess, almost shaken into tears by the attack on her nerves. "Mrs. Cagely," said our hero, "will you allow me to speak to the gentlemen?"

"Hear! hear! hear!" cried young Sloth, and his friends.

"I believe, sir," said Titus with severe civility, "you are the son of Sir Jeremy Sloth, baronet?"

"Just as you please," answered the easy Sloth, "if you'd prefer the great Mogul for my father, he is quite at your service."

"May I then inquire, sir, why you take the liberty, at this late hour of night"——Titus was stopt short.

"Mother Cagely," said one of the gentlemen, who had thrown himself upon a couch, "you hav'n't an empty kilderkin that you could put your friend in?—he could then preach to us through the bung-hole."

"Pray, sir, what wages may Mrs. Cagely give you?" asked young Sloth.

"Wages, sir!" cried Trumps.

"Or are you one of those benevolent and eccentric persons, who champion such people gratis?"

"Don't you know who he is, Sloth," cried the speaker on the sofa. "Don't you know him? Why, it's Billy Skins the breeches-maker."

A man may sometimes parry the thrust of a wild bull better than a sarcasm. Titus Trumps felt himself that man. At first, too, he thought the gentleman might be mistaken—that, possibly, there might be a strong resemblance between himself and the breeches-maker.

"Ha! egad, and so it is," exclaimed Sloth—"it is William Skins. And so your wife still beats you, eh, Billy? Shocking black eye."

"Sir—Mr. Sloth—my name, sir, is Trumps."

"You don't mean it?" asked young Sloth, with an affected look of wonder.

"Titus Trumps, sir—and since this lady has put herself under my protection"—and here Titus, pointing to Mrs. Cagely, was interrupted by a loud laugh from the three reprobates.

"She *has!* I'll tell your wife, Billy, 'pon my soul I will," cried Sloth, and his companions shouted, to the further confusion of Titus.

"Sir," exclaimed Titus to Sloth, "do you fight?"

"Why, Skins, why?" coolly inquired the baronet's son.

"Oh! Mr. Trumps—not in my house—for the love of heaven," exclaimed Mrs. Cagely, scenting blood.

"Do you fight, sir?" repeated Titus.

"Been out nine-and-fifty times, that's all, my breeches-maker," answered young Sloth.

"I'm glad of it, sir," said Titus; "though, for the present, permit me again to state that I am not a breeches-maker."

"No?"

"No, sir; yet sir, allow me to add, if I were a breeches-maker"——

"Well, sir, if you were a breeches-maker?"

"Seeing, sir, you have been called out so very often, I should have felt myself particularly fortunate in your custom."

Really generous minds are ever open to a joke. A good jest is the touchstone that tries a good fellow. Sloth and his companions burst into an applauding shout of laughter. The gallant on the sofa sprang up, and clapping Titus on the shoulder, vowed he'd swear by him for a gentleman and a jolly dog; and the baronet's son—the victim who had received the dangerous thrust—shook his assailant by the hand, protesting that he had taken a sudden liking to him.

It is stoutly insisted upon, especially by those who have been lucky themselves, that every man, no matter how low and wretched, has one golden offer in his life, if he will but accept it: no one, it is averred, is so neglected by fortune as not to have one chance, even, we presume, in a tin-mine. It is our faith that the dullest man—the merest clod—has his one joke, if he will but utter it. It is evident, that the supremacy of human nature consists in its capacity for jesting; man acknowledges his common dignity in the jokes of mankind. To suppose, then, that there are benighted individuals whose brains have never throbbed with a jest—who have never felt that expansion of their nature attending the conception of a joke—is to lower them in the scale of created beings. It makes nothing against our position, that a man has never been known to utter a good thing; like a lady with a loaded blunderbuss in her hand, he may have been afraid of it; or, with enviable magnanimity, he may have refused to discharge his wit, thinking it dangerous to others in the explosion, and very dangerous indeed to himself in the recoil. We have met with men who, in moments of confidence, have averred that they always had their loaded small-arms about them, but loved their fellow-creatures and themselves too well, ever to pull a trigger. These phi-

lanthropists are very properly loud in their condemnation of less amiable men. For our part, we have a particular reverence towards those gentle spirits who "out-Herod Herod," and slay the witlings of their brain—simply because they may be troublesome to others—the moment they are conceived.

We have been so far tempted from the line of our narrative by the retort of Trumps upon young Sloth. It was the only instance recorded in his whole life of his having attempted such a feat: as he gave utterance to the reply, he felt suddenly upraised, elevated—he seemed to joke by inspiration. No one could be more surprised at the jest than Titus himself. Had a diamond, large as any in the crown, fallen from his mouth, he had not been more astonished: he did *not* think it had been in him. To continue our story.

Mrs. Cagely, seeing the agreeable turn of things, addressed young Sloth with renewed fervour: she protested upon every thing that was most dear to her in the next world, and upon every thing very particularly valuable to her in the present, that the lady he sought was not in the house; that she knew not her whereabout, or would, on the instant, be too proud and happy to confess it.

Young Sloth and his friends, mollified by the

humour of Trumps, affected to believe the declaration of Mrs. Cagely, and prepared themselves to depart.

"Perhaps, sir, unless you have more tender business on hand," said Sloth to Trumps, "you will favour us with your company to a bottle?—Stop—why should we go? Can't we pass the rest of the night here?"

"Impossible, gentlemen, on the present occasion: really, what do you take my house for?" asked the indignant hostess.

"Come, come, Mother Cagely—some burgundy. You drink burgundy, Mr. Trumps?" asked one of the gentlemen.

"Certainly—certainly," answered Titus, and then he thought "I have no money; no matter—something will turn up."

"Zounds! my dear Trumps," said young Sloth, and as Titus heard himself familiarly accosted by the baronet's son, his very marrow seemed in a glow —"that's an awkward rap"—and the speaker pointed to the bruise upon the temple and about the right eye of our hero.

"A scoundrel of a watchman," said Titus.

"A fight with a watchman! well, you are a lad of spirit,"—exclaimed Mr. Mims, the airiest of Sloth's companions.

"But—but I'll trounce him to-morrow," cried Trumps.

"Would you like to change your neckcloth and ruffles?"—they were dyed with blood—asked Mrs. Cagely.

"You couldn't oblige me?" asked Trumps, making from the room, hoping that the offer was made by his hostess to get him quietly from the party, and thus to give him the glad opportunity of falling at the feet of Miss Sloth. "After all," thought Trumps, as he quitted the room, "how lucky that I should become so very intimate with her brother!"

"Where—where's the lady?" asked the anxious Titus, as he found himself outside the door, followed by Mrs. Cagely.

"She has sent word that she couldn't come to-night—will be sure to be here to-morrow," answered the hostess, and merely adding, "John will show you the room," turned away, we presume to attend to the multifarious duties of her hospitable homestead.

"Still, how very lucky that I should have met her brother," again thought Titus. "I have but to make him my friend—and he already seems very much taken with me—to marry Emily with her father's consent. I thought something would

happen—I felt sure that something would turn up." Such were the hopes, such the self-complacency of Trumps, whilst engaged at his toilette. Another neckcloth, with ruffles of texture and web of even superior fineness to his own—no doubt, thought Titus, late property of the late husband of Mrs. Cagely—replaced the blood-stained articles of our hero, who again joined his new companions, and was received by them with additional marks of sudden friendship.

"Really, Mims," said young Sloth, as he crossed to him, "a very decent lad—very."

"Very, but I think Arcadian," answered Mims —"hasn't long left his oaten pipe and fleeces."

"Talking of fleeces," replied Sloth confidentially, "let's have cards." Then aloud to Trumps, "What say you, Mr. Trumps? you play? Plague on drink only! 'tisn't intellectual. You play?"

"A—a—little," answered Trumps. "I—I"—

"Oh, light work!—very light work! Button-top stakes—merely button-tops"—said young Sloth.

"I have no cash about me, gentlemen," said Trumps.

"No true gentleman ever has," answered Mims, "but the honour of some men—and I am sure Mr. Titus Trumps is one of them—is far preferable to ready money."

Trumps gracefully acknowledged the compli-

ment. "If—if" he thought, already forgetful of light stakes, "if I should win a thousand pounds!"

Titus knew nothing of cards—but, for a time, his luck was very great. He won and won, and as he won he quaffed the burgundy, and he seemed, like a young chick of fortune, to nestle warm beneath the wings of hope.

"Ha!" exclaimed Mims, as Trumps played the last card—"ha! I thought you held the best diamond.—What's the matter?"

"Nothing," said Trumps, with sudden paleness—"nothing." But Titus spoke not the truth: as Mims pronounced the word diamond, Trumps instinctively felt his left little finger—the ring was gone! "No matter—most likely took it off when I washed my hands—yes, I must have left it somewhere," concluded Titus—"it's sure to turn up,"—and the clock struck two.

CHAPTER VIII.

Nine o'clock, and the party still at cards. "There—there—it's becoming dissipation," cried young Sloth—"I'm quite—quite satisfied." And well he might be, for Trumps had lost to him and Mims all his first winnings, with the important addition of seven hundred pounds.

"I—I told you—Mr. Sloth," said Titus, his brain in a whirl with wine and a confused sense of his loss—"I told you I had no cash about me."

"Don't mention it—here's pen, ink, and paper; your acknowledgment, and the money any time in the course of to day or to-morrow."

"If something doesn't turn up," thought Trumps, with a pang, as he signed the necessary document—"if something doesn't turn up"—and he staggered from the table to a couch.

"Well! gentlemen," exclaimed Mrs. Cagely, as she bounced into the room—"if ever I suffer any such doings in my house again—drinking and playing all night! Had I known it, do you think I could have rested in my bed?"

"Come here, mother," said young Sloth, in an affectionate voice, to the matronly hostess—"come here. Now, tell me where that jade Maria is, and I'll give you fifty."

"May I never go to heaven, Mr. Sloth, if I know no more about her,"——

"I am sure she called here last night. Well—well—the baggage!—let me catch her! that's all,"—and Sloth, Mims, and their quiet, nameless friend, having called a coach, quitted the open mansion of Mrs. Cagely.

"Mr. Trumps—Mr. Trumps,"—cried Mrs.

Cagely, shaking our hero, fallen asleep, on the couch.

"Sweet Emily," muttered Titus, in his heavy slumber.

"Curse Emily!" exclaimed the meek Mrs. Cagely. "Mr. Trumps—I wish Mrs. Anodyne had been further! I have enough to do with my own affairs—Mr. Trumps, I say"——

"Never mind your father," sighed the dreaming Titus.

"Mr. Trump——s," screamed Mrs. Cagely, in a high, prolonged note. Titus shook himself—stretched his legs—opened his eyes—and serenely asked, "What's the matter?"

"Matter! it's nearly ten o'clock, and you must go before the justice," replied the provident bail.

"I didn't leave a diamond ring upon the table, did I?" asked Trumps, and the question was answered by a clap of laughter on the part of Mrs. Cagely.

"Diamonds, forsooth! all your diamonds are on your knees, I take it," said the jocose hostess.

"Come, all's not gone," thought Titus, glancing at the paste in blue-steel, "I have my buckles."

"John, call a coach," ordered Mrs. Cagely, who was particularly assiduous in assisting Trumps to the door; and that the coachman might, by no

possibility, drive to the wrong police office, the good woman ordered her footman to take his seat upon the box. "Mind, John, you know where," said Mrs. Cagely, as the coach drove off.

"How very good of her to send her servant!" thought Titus, who in a few minutes was conveyed to the hall of justice. John assisted Trumps to descend; and as he led the tipsy Titus to the door of the office, he muttered gratefully, "saved mistress's bail, however."

"I shall not be long, John," said Titus, and John, with a grin, touched his hat.

Ere Trumps entered the office, he turned again, and saw a carriage suddenly stop at the door. The door was opened, and, to his astonishment, Sir Jeremy Sloth discovered himself. But what was the surprise of Trumps when he beheld the gentle Emily herself in the vehicle! He kissed his hand to her, and the lady blushed and turned away her head. "How kind—how tender—how delightful her attention, to come herself, that she might hear without the least delay, the result of the proceedings!"

Sir Jeremy, without noticing Trumps, stalked into the office. Titus cast a burning glance at Emily, and followed, hoping speedily to dispatch the business, and then to return and carry off Miss Sloth. As Trumps proceeded down the passage, he caught the eye of the complaining watchman in

the cause. "That's *him!*" said Starlight, pointing out the delinquent Titus to a companion—"that's him—but we'll teach him how to murder watchmen, for all his fine coat."

Trumps entered the office as the clerk called out the name of "Abraham Swag." The owner of that name was immediately put to the bar. Trumps immediately saw in the accused, his dungeon-friend "Edgar St. Evremond," the wronged heir, who had pressed both his hands with such genuine gratitude for service proffered. "I see it," said Titus to himself. "I see it—how delicate of him to hide his real name!"

The case was immediately gone into. General Bomby swore that he was in conversation with his friend Sir Jeremy Sloth, when the prisoner made a snatch at his gold-mounted amber box, and ran away. He was apprehended, but the box was found in the mud.

Sir Jeremy Sloth, in the most positive and careful manner, and at considerable length, corroborated the evidence of General Bomby.

The prisoner protested that he was very short-sighted—it was his family malady—that he ran against the general without seeing him, who set up a cry of "stop thief!" and that, without knowing what he did, he ran away. As for the box, he never saw it, as was proved by its not being found upon him.

"Why—why doesn't he speak of his wrongs?" thought Trumps—a confused recollection of Edgar's story dawning upon him.

"Very sorry, general, we can do nothing with this case. The property wasn't found upon the prisoner. Abraham Swag, you have had a very lucky escape: never let us see you here again," said the magistrate.

The prisoner bowed, and quitted the dock, taking no heed of the signs made to him by Titus Trumps, who was prevented following the lucky culprit, by the clerk calling—

"Titus Trumps." Titus was put into the place for delinquents, as Sir Jeremy was about to leave the court. The baronet paused near the offender, ascertained that he was really the person he suspected him to be, and then returned and whispered confidentially to the justice. After this, the baronet returned to his coach, and drove a morning round with Miss Sloth.

Starlight gave his evidence with considerable fluency; with the art of a master, painted his own enduring patience, and the savage brutality of the offender, Titus Trumps.

"Pray, have you ever been here before?" asked the magistrate.

"Never," said the muddled Titus.

"You have never been charged with entering

gentlemen's houses under suspicious circumstances, eh?" said the justice. "Does any body know him here?" Fortunately, no officer had any knowledge of the accused. "I suppose, watchman, he was drunk?"

"Your worship, beastly," said Starlight.

"You were not much hurt, watchman, by the assault of the prisoner?" asked the magistrate.

"Providence was upon me," answered Starlight.

"Notwithstanding, the watch must be protected. Titus Trumps, I shall fine you for drunkenness and riotous conduct, twenty shillings. And, now that you are sober, I expect that you will make an apology to that poor man;" but Starlight, with extraordinary magnanimity, expressed himself perfectly satisfied. "Titus Trumps, twenty shillings," said the magistrate.

Titus placed his hand in his empty breeches'-pocket, and found he had not twenty farthings: the shock sobered him.

"I—I must send for the money," said Trumps, confounded. "Oh!" there was hope still, "doubtless, Mrs. Cagely's footman had the money about him:" but to the astonishment of Titus, he discovered, on sending to seek him, that he and the coach were gone. "No matter—I—I must dispatch somebody to the Flower Pot."

"Very well," said an assistant of the office,

"any thing to accommodate, but till the money's paid, we must lock you up."

"Surely, something *must* happen," thought Titus, as he suffered himself to be led towards the strong-room.

"Ha! what, Mr. Trumps? Eh! How's this?" asked a person, who, to the joy of our hero, was one of the English merchants with whom he had dined the day before. "Don't you know me? My name's Chattels."

"Very—very—very happy to see you," exclaimed Titus with the deepest sincerity.

"Why—what's that?" asked the picture-dealer —"Eh? bless me! an awkward blow,"—and Chattels stared at the discoloured eye.

"'Twill soon go off. I am almost ashamed to ask—but I last night fell into a little fray—the magistrate has convicted, and—the strangest thing in the world!—I réally have not twenty shillings about me."

"Say no more, sir—the money's very much at your service," and Chattels produced the welcome guinea.

"I knew something would happen," thought Titus, as he paid the fine; and generously gave the extra shilling to the poor-box. "What good luck was it brought you here?"

"Luck! That vagabond Hammer—it was after

you went—you heard something about the 'Mother and Child'—he's always flinging it in my teeth—well, one word brought another—and—and to make short of it, I'm come here to take out a warrant for him."

The reader must know, that in their professional dealings something had passed between Messrs. Hammer and Chattels, relative to a "Mother and Child" (an undoubted Guido), which, at least in the opinion of one of the parties, did not very favourably illustrate the honesty of Mr. Chattels. *Hinc*—the "warrant."

Chattels transacted his important business, and left the office with Trumps. "How lucky that I met with you!" cried Titus.

"Ha! Mr. Trumps, a real friend to a young man in a town like this—especially to a young man of property—for there are sharks, Mr. Trumps, believe me, sir—there are sharks"——

"I have some property," said Titus, and as he spoke, he stood stock-still, and scarcely suppressed a groan. The thought of his loss to young Sloth fell upon him: his honour was at stake—the money must be raised.

"What's the matter, sir?" asked Chattels.

"It will be impossible for me to pursue my suit with Miss Sloth until I have paid her brother," thought Titus. "Mr. Chattels—as I said, I have

some property: as a merchant—pardon the liberty I take with you—as a merchant, possibly you could put me in the way to realise—I have some houses"—

"Freehold?" asked Chattels, smilingly.

"Freehold," answered Trumps.

"Say no more, sir—if my adviser, Tapetight, is satisfied with the title"—

"Thank you, sir—a thousand thanks," exclaimed Trumps, not waiting for more: "how lucky I met with you! But so it is—I am certainly the most fortunate fellow alive. Whenever I am in difficulty, something is always sure to happen."

"We'll call to-night at the Flower Pot," said Chattels.

"To-night!" cried Trumps—"I must have the money to-day, Mr. Chattels. The fact is"—poor, simple Titus—"I am in desperate want of the money—my name will be dishonoured, unless the money be found to-day."

There is something, says Rochefoucauld, in the distresses of our friends, that is not altogether unpleasing to us. Certain we are, that the expression of Mr. Chattel's countenance, as Trumps told his necessities, served to illustrate the truth of the Frenchman's maxim.

"Tut—tut, Mr. Trumps—you are very young in the world; the truth is, sir, no man as pays in

the end, can be dishonoured. We'll take a bit of dinner with you at the Flower Pot, at three," concluded Mr. Chattels, and shaking Trumps by the hand, hastily left him.

"The Flower Pot!" The words immediately brought to the recollection of Titus the promise of Edgar St. Evremond. Edgar—there was no doubting it—was gone to seek him at the Flower Pot. "Coach," called Titus, and he stept into the ready vehicle. Put down at the desired inn, Trumps, with his hand to his black eye, commanded Robert to pay the coachman. A moment Robert hesitated, paid the shilling, and followed Trumps up stairs.

"Mr. St. Evremond has not been here for me?" asked Titus, assured of an affirmative.

"Not been here," replied Robert.

"To be sure—there's been hardly time yet; but hark'ye, Robert—when he comes, let me immediately know; and Robert—I shall dine at home to-day, with—yes—for he will come—with three friends. Egad! how lucky. Mr. Chattels' lawyer may be the very man to assist poor St. Evremond. How fortunate! that things should so have turned up. Mind—three o'clock, Robert. What's the matter?" for Robert tarried.

"A woman, five minutes ago, brought little packet," said Robert.

"Where is it?" exclaimed Trumps.

"There," and Robert pointed to the article on the dressing-table.

"Her picture, no doubt," concluded Trumps, as his eyes devoured the packet. "What *do* you want?" for Robert lingered.

"Mistress wishes to know if you sleep at home to-night?"

"Per—perhaps," answered Trumps, hoping the best, but not knowing where he might sleep.

The servant quitted the room, and Trumps, trembling all over, took up the packet. He sat down, holding it unopened in his hand. "Her picture, no doubt," repeated Titus; "and no doubt, set with brilliants."

Trumps broke the seal, and tearing away many covers, came at length to a most touching evidence of woman's tenderness. He gazed upon no painted beauties—but held a real good. He thought to gaze upon the eyes, mouth, the lovely nose and dimpled chin of a doating maiden, accompanied by a letter crammed with sweetest things; and he held a pot of ointment, encircled with a minute direction for its salutary application to a bruise.

"Very strange of her," said Trumps, "but very tender." A piece of paper bore these words. "Would Mr. Trumps think it too much trouble to look in at Mrs. Cagely's, this evening, at ten?"

"I see it,"—Trumps always saw everything, and the clearer, for the utter darkness that enveloped it—"I see it: she observed my hurt from the carriage, and drove home that she might forward this," and Titus gazed at the ointment. "How very tender! How lucky, too, that I received the blow—otherwise I hadn't known the delicacy of her affection!"

Titus took his late breakfast in his apartment; and, having amended his toilette, and anointed his eye, whose injuries were flung into shadow by a shade benevolently proffered by the daughter of the landlady, he descended to dine. Mr. Chattels, with his legal friend Tapetight, was punctual.

"Mr. St. Evremond not come?" asked Titus.

"Not come," replied Robert.

"Very strange—but he *will* come. However, we'll not wait," and the party sat down to dinner.

We cannot for a certainty state what the intentions of Abraham Swag, alias Edgar St. Evremond, might have been had he remained perfectly himself; but this we know, when Trumps most expected him, he was most unfit to appear; being at the time far gone with several early friends in liquor, swallowed to commemorate the escape of Abraham from justice, and bought from the proceeds of a diamond ring, found under the strangest circumstances by the persecuted heir.

As for the negociation between our hero and Mr. Chattels for the sale of the property, the reader will, we think, feel inclined to believe that Mr. Tapetight was tolerably satisfied with the validity of the title, from the fact that his client at once advanced Mr. Trumps one hundred pounds—the remaining eight hundred to be paid on the signing of the deeds; with this proviso, that if, on inspection of the houses, Mr. Chattels should disapprove of the lot, the hundred pounds, for which Titus had given his bond, to be repaid.

Such was the bargain. Titus happily remembered that he had appointed that day or the next for the payment of his debt to young Sloth; and of course the gentleman would not expect it before the later time. Before then, he could obtain a further advance from Mr. Chattels—how very odd that he had turned out to be a picture-merchant!—and, at least, pay the greater part. Besides, before next day, many things might happen; yes, it was almost certain that something would turn up.

CHAPTER IX.

Twenty minutes, at least, before the appointed hour of ten, Titus drove to the house of Mrs. Cagely, who received him with a sour and withered

aspect. "Had Mr. Trumps," she asked with a contemptuous leer, "found his diamond ring?"

"No—but it's no matter, none in the least," replied Trumps airily.

"No—I don't suppose a gentleman like yourself can much miss it," observed the satirical hostess.

"It's very odd, though—very odd where I could have left it; no matter, some day 'twill turn up," said Titus. "And now, my dear Mrs. Cagely," and Trumps with more than his usual tenderness took the cold hand of the ungrateful woman—for she seemed to have wholly forgotten his politeness in the carriage,—"tell me if my charmer"—

"She'll be here at ten," drawled Mrs. Cagely.

"But young Sloth—I trust to-night, he'll not interrupt us?" said Titus. "It's clear she was frightened by him last night."

"He's out of town; and won't come back this week," replied Mrs. Cagely.

"How very lucky!" exclaimed Titus; and again he thought "how very lucky! He can't expect the money before he arrives, and by that time—how very lucky!"

"He's gone as I hear upon particular business—the marriage settlement of his sister."

"Marriage settlement!" repeated Titus, wonderingly. "Marriage settlement!"

"Yes—the match has been long talked about;

she's to marry a gentleman who was here last night."

"So I thought," observed Titus, and he stared vacantly at his informant.

"An old friend of his—Mr. Mims; that very pleasant gentleman," said Mrs. Cagely.

"Good God!" said Titus Trumps.

"What's the matter, sir? You hav'n't lost another diamond ring?" asked the malicious landlady.

"There must really be some mistake in this. Pray answer me, madam—for my peace, my happiness, my honour is involved in this affair. You say Miss Sloth is to marry Mr. Mims?"

"Joined in their very cradles," answered Mrs. Cagely, in a touching tone.

"Then—then—madam, can you inform me, who it is I came here to meet?"

Ere Mrs. Cagely could answer the impatient question of our hero, the footman announced "Mrs. Anodyne;" and the smiling widow swam into the room, and with her frank, bounteous heart melting in her eyes, made a captivating curtsey to Titus Trumps.

Titus drew back—recovered himself—then stammered, "I believe the lady I had the pleasure to meet in—in"—

"The watch-house," said Mrs. Anodyne, with

charming simplicity. "Ha!" she observed, looking archly at the black eye of our hero, "I knew how it would be."

"It's nothing," exclaimed Titus. "Nothing. 'Twill soon go off."

"I'll be bound for it," said Mrs. Anodyne with great vivacity, "or, my dear husband—may he rest, wherever he is!—spent forty years of his life to very little purpose."

Titus said nothing; but he could not conceive what connexion there could possibly be between his bruised eye and the forty years' labour of the late Mr. Anodyne.

"He was a physician, sir, of vast mind, but above the petty arts of practice. Strange, sir, as it may appear, he never kept his carriage."

"Content in his profession to be one of the infantry," observed Trumps.

Mrs. Anodyne smiled and said, "I was a baby when I married him. Wasn't I, Mrs. Cagely?"

"Quite a chick," answered that veracious woman, and folding her arms, she jutted from the room.

"He was more like a grandfather than a husband to me, Mr. Trumps," sighed Mrs. Anodyne. "But the goodness of his life was doubled at his death. Pardon this tedious tribute to his memory, sir; but when I look in your eye, I cannot but feel anew how much mankind are indebted to him."

"Perhaps," thought Trumps, "he attended my father—perhaps she's a bill against me as heir-at-law."

"On his death-bed, he called me to him. 'Adeliza,' he said, 'I have nothing to leave you.' Ha, sir! that was a cruel hour, indeed."

"It must have been," assented the sympathizing Trumps.

"'Nothing but this,"'—and he gave me carefully sealed a paper. 'In that little packet is the produce of forty years' incessant study—take it, my Adeliza—take it, and heaven bless you with it.' And in that packet, sir, was a secret equal in worth to the mystery of the philosopher's stone."

"Of course, you administered?" said Trumps.

"Alas, sir! even the alchemist might with all his wisdom perish in the street, wanting the money to set up his furnace. He may be able to turn lead to gold, but he must first buy the lead, sir."

"This is a remarkably sensible woman!" thought Titus.

"I know not how it is that I have been induced to take this interest in a stranger! I—you are from the country, sir?"

"I am, madam," answered Titus, unnecessarily; as Mrs. Frillington, the maid, had gathered his whole history from the good people at the Flower

Pot. "But, your husband's secret?" pressed Titus—"I don't dare to ask you what it is?"

"Ha! sir," replied Mrs. Anodyne, "you need not, for I am delighted to see you bear its magical effect about you."

"I,—Madam! Where?"

"Your eye, sir—your eye, Mr. Trumps;" and Mrs. Anodyne smiled with new sweetness on the good-looking Titus.

Our hero immediately perceived in the bounteous lady before him the donor of the ointment—immediately understood that that "sovereign remedy" for an outward bruise, was the golden fruit of forty years' study on the part of the late Dr. Anodyne. Titus put his hand to his heart, and bowed his silent thanks to the widow.

"I hope you were not detained long last night? I requested my good friend Mrs. Cagely—she's a charming woman, and has known me from a child—to fly to your release."

"Then it is to you, madam, I owe my deliverance last night from that den?"—asked the grateful Trumps.

"Never think of it, sir—never name it. And pray, sir, pardon what may have seemed a boldness unworthy of my sex; but fearing you were much hurt, and wishing to assure myself that the discovery of my late husband"—

"Where is the ointment to be had, madam?" asked Titus, somewhat unceremoniously.

"It is not published," answered Mrs. Anodyne, with dignity.

"That's a great pity," said Trumps.

"I have often thought so," said the widow.

"So valuable a discovery," exclaimed Titus.

"A mine of wealth, sir," answered the lady.

"So useful to families," continued Trumps, "if it cures all bruises."

"To the whole civilised world, sir," replied the widow.

"And then such an honourable fortune might be obtained from it. Immense sums, I have heard, are made by lesser things."

"Sums, sir! There's the Trittleton family—are you aware, sir, that that noble house owes its wealth, and consequently its rank to this simple occurrence,—its founder was the great originator of potted shrimps?"

"Is it possible?" asked Trumps.

"Look at their coach-pannel, sir; they quarter them," said the widow hastily.

"What! shrimps?" exclaimed Trumps.

"Why, they choose to call them dolphins,"—said Mrs. Anodyne, with a tragic sneer.

"Well, I wouldn't be above the shrimp-sauce," cried Titus, with commendable humility.

"Why, sir, for what we can tell to the contrary, a coronet may be extracted from an anchovy,"—said the widow.

"May it, indeed?"

"That is, in sauce—a coronet extracted from sauce. Sir, it is very curious to look into the beginnings of people."

"And sometimes very disagreeable," rejoined Trumps.

"Would you believe it, sir,—I can point out a family, that has supplied one governor to a colony and three members to parliament, that owed all its original wealth to the introduction of cranberry tarts? What say you to that, sir?"

"Why, madam, there, curiously enough, you touch upon one of my tastes. I think that noble family deserves all it gets," and Titus almost smacked his lips. "But, why—why, madam, has Dr. Anodyne's"—

"I know what you are about to ask, sir. Why has it not been given to the world? The truth is, a suit in Chancery, a suit, that *must* be decided in my favour, a suit involving many, many thousands"—

Suddenly the eyes of Trumps glowed with lambent fire towards Mrs. Anodyne, and he thought, "How lucky, that Mims marries Miss Sloth!"

"Although the money—it was left by my aunt—

is as nothing to what, with proper care, might be obtained from Dr. Anodyne's bequest."

"You wouldn't"—there was certainly a want of delicacy, both in the question and the manner of Titus—"you wouldn't sell it?"

"Not the whole of it," answered Mrs. Anodyne, with some coldness; and then relenting, she added, "but I should not object, if I approved of the person, to take a partner."

As Mrs. Anodyne rounded her small mouth with these words, Titus Trumps saw in it the type and promise of the wedding ring!

In half-an-hour Titus Trumps and Adeliza Anodyne mutually agreed to a partnership for life.

"I knew something would happen—I was certain something would turn up!" thought Trumps, as the reluctant widow promised to be his.

CHAPTER X.

"A RIPE, handsome widow, a promising Chancery-suit, and a patent ointment! Was ever man so lucky? How fortunate that he had escaped Miss Sloth! After all, it was very foolish in a man to marry out of his sphere—he was always looked upon by his wife's family as an interloper." These

were the morning thoughts of Titus, lying late in bed at the Flower Pot. "To be sure—the patent was mortgaged for four hundred pounds; but then, luckily, it was in the hands of Mr. Chattels, a good-natured creature, who might be persuaded to do anything." (It certainly was a curious coincidence that the same Mr. Chattels, general dealer, who was about to advance money to our youth of many hopes, had some months since accommodated Mrs. Anodyne with the loan of certain sums, for the payment of which he had of late, in the words of the fair creditor, been "seriously rude.") Titus, however, was resolved, in so important a step as marriage, not to commit himself; no, he was determined to be particularly cautious; and the subjoined dialogue between him and Mr. Chattels, may, in some degree, illustrate the prudence of our hero.

"What do you think of—I believe you know the lady—what do you think of Mrs. Anodyne?" asked Titus of the dealer, who called at noon at the Flower Pot.

"Think of her! Mr. Trumps, a charming woman—such sense—such spirits—everything that could make a man happy." This was the flattering opinion of Mr. Chattels; who, we may as well state, had had a recent opportunity of confirming it, having just quitted the lady, who possibly might

have informed him of her approaching marriage with the youthful Titus.

"That's my opinion," said Titus. "Her husband, the doctor, was very old, eh?—and very infirm?"

"Very—but such a head, sir! He left such a fortune behind him!"

"In land, or money?" asked Titus, affecting the greatest ignorance.

"In better than anything—in an invention; only, it's never been used," answered Chattels.

"You don't mean the 'Fortunatus Ointment,' eh?"

"I offered Mrs. Anodyne five hundred pounds for only a share of it," said Chattels—"but women are obstinate, sir—she wouldn't take it."

"How very lucky," thought Titus. "And you think it really—a—good thing?"

"Wonderful. There's Sackbut—he's clerk of Canaan Chapel—he and his wife fought so, the poor man used to lose half his Sundays—now, he's never seen with a spot upon him. Folks think his wife's turned quite a lamb—bless you, that's not it—she's worse than ever. Only poor Sackbut's taken this precaution—he's never without the ointment."

"I thought it wasn't to be purchased," observed Titus.

"No more it is," replied Chattels, "I gave it him."

"And then there's a Chancery suit, which Mrs. Anodyne must gain?" said Trumps.

"In time," replied the dealer.

"I believe—you'll excuse the question—I believe Mrs. Anodyne is your debtor?" asked Trumps.

"For a trifle," answered Chattels, "but we won't talk of that. I come now about your houses. You say, you want the money immediately?"

"I hav'n't heard from young Sloth," thought Trumps—"to be sure, he'll be too busy with this marriage to think of the debt." And then aloud, "why, the truth is, Mr. Chattels, I am about to treat with Mrs. Anodyne for her patent."

"Patent!"

"The patent of the 'Fortunatus Ointment,'" said Trumps; for he thought he would keep his marriage a secret that he might make better terms with the dealer. "I believe the patent is mortgaged to you?"—

"Yes—the—the prescription—it's all the same. That is, Mrs. Anodyne is under a heavy penalty to me, if she makes use of the secret. By-the-bye, if I had thought of it, I'd have sent you a pot: with a piece no bigger than a pea, your eye would have been quite well."

On this, Trumps began to doubt the instant efficacy of the salve; as he had fairly daubed his

wound with it, to little purpose. Again he thought —"to be sure, my flesh is very difficult to heal—I think there never was such flesh—very difficult, indeed."

"I've advanced her four hundred pounds; and, I tell you what—you shall have the document for three."

"You'll be able to get me that money on my property?" asked Trumps, musing.

"In a day or too," replied Chattels.

"Then it's a bargain," and Trumps shook the dealer's hand. "How lucky!" thought Titus, "thus I save a hundred."

Days pass on, and every day Titus pays his court to the widow, who, for various delicate reasons, insists that their approaching marriage should be kept a perfect secret. Only one week had elapsed, ere the happy Trumps was enabled to present Mrs. Anodyne with her bond redeemed from Chattels. There never was so happy—so grateful a woman!

The next day, Trumps walked to the usual place of appointment, to that sylvan haunt, Kensington Gardens. Ere noon, punctual as time itself, Mrs. Anodyne was wont to be there. For half-an-hour, Titus lingered, his heart vainly jumping at the approach of every petticoat. "I'm too early, no doubt," thought Titus, and he walked solitarily for

another quarter of an hour. "She was always here at twelve—always—oh! I must be too early," saying which, Titus sauntered to the sun-dial. He saw by the shadow on the plate, that the time was a quarter to one. Any other less happy man would have been convinced that the widow had either forgotten, or was careless of her appointment. Not so Titus; for with his eye still upon the shadow he had hope—yes, even looking at the sun-dial, he involuntarily exclaimed—"Perhaps, it's too fast."

Trumps took his way to the house of the convenient Mrs. Cagely, who briefly informed him that Mrs. Anodyne had quitted London for some months; nay, more; that it was very uncertain whether she would ever return.

Titus was astounded at the intelligence. "A base, ungrateful, designing woman!" he cried, to the equable Mrs. Cagely. He was in a very fever of indignation, as he passed down the street; and then he stopt, and said exultingly to himself—"how very lucky I've secured the ointment."

Titus entered the public room of The Flower Pot; he was instantly addressed by Robert.

"Beg your pardon, sir, but gentleman—Mr. Mims—who's been often for you—he's been here."

"How lucky I was out!" thought Trumps.

"He's stuck something on the glass, sir."

Trumps walked to the mirror, and there saw this pithy notice—

"This is to warn all gentlemen from playing with Titus Trumps, late of Cirencester, Gloucestershire, but now of the Flower Pot, London; unless the said Titus Trumps first banks his stakes.

"J. S."

"Has anybody been here since this has been up?" asked Titus, who had turned as white as the paper. "Anybody, Robert?"

"One person, sir;" answered Robert.

"And he—he looked towards the glass,—he" —stammered Titus.

"Looked towards glass," replied Straight.

Trumps bent his brows—bit his nail—then, suddenly brightening up, exclaimed "Never mind—perhaps—perhaps, he couldn't read."

At three that day, Mr. Chattels came to dine at the Flower Pot. He assured Titus, that, very much to his regret, he found it impossible to advance more than four hundred and fifty pounds upon the cottages: money never had been so scarce.

"All the better," thought Titus, when he found the dealer inexorable,—"all the better—I shall have the less to pay back. Very well, Mr. Chattels, four hundred and fifty."

"Of course, I include the picture I spoke of at

thirty—in time it will be worth a hundred," said Chattels.

"I'll send it to my aunt," determined Titus, "of course she'll return me something treble its worth. Very well."

"Well, then, Tapetight will call upon you to-morrow, and conclude the business."

"A fortunate escape for me, that Mrs. Anodyne," observed Titus.

"Ha! sir," replied Chattels—"I'd have been bound for that woman; but there's no trusting any of 'em. You leave the subject of the picture quite to me?"

"Quite: only let it be something handsome," answered Titus.

"Depend upon me, Mr. Trumps," said Chattels, and squeezing his customer's hand, the patron of the fine arts departed.

The next day Tapetight appeared with the necessary documents. Titus signed and held forth his hand for the balance: on which, Mr. Tapetight presented his bill of expenses, making Titus Trumps, Esq. his debtor to the amount of fifty pounds.

"Oh! yes, it's all perfectly right," said Tapetight, in his own pleasant way. "You see, one hundred advanced, three hundred the bond to Mrs. Anodyne"—

"I've secured the 'Fortunatus'" thought Trumps.

"That makes four hundred —thirty for a picture"—

"A parcel for you, sir, from Mr. Chattels," said the servant, presenting it.

"That's it, no doubt," said Tapetight. "Four hundred and thirty—and my bill seventy, leaves just a balance of fifty pounds. You'll find it quite right,—good morning," and the legal man departed.

"No matter—I've secured the ointment," repeated Trumps, as he inspected the parcel. "And here—here's the picture for auntey." For a minute, Titus stared at the likeness of a gentleman in a military dress, and looking at the back of the frame, to his astonishment, read—"Portrait of General Wolfe."

CHAPTER XI.

Titus—he had made several handsome presents to Mrs. Anodyne—was left with about fifteen shillings in his pocket, a debtor to a lawyer, and the proprietor of the Flower Pot. "Never mind—something will happen. I have," he mused, "the prescription of 'the Fortunatus Ointment,' and something must turn up."

Mr. Tapetight sent a very polite letter, and the

keeper of the Flower Pot presented the bill. Titus was at his wit's end.

He sat, in a deep study of ways and means, when to the extreme astonishment of a gentleman in the coffee-room he jumped up exclaiming,—"I have it! The tea-pot!"—

Yes, at that moment, the tea-pot—crammed with gold and bank paper—of Miss Virginia Trumps, beamed upon her hopeful nephew; who immediately called for pen, ink, and paper, and wrote a most eloquent letter to the virgin at Cirencester, stating that wealth and honour beyond description could be secured, if she could but be induced to advance only one-twentieth part of the riches contained in her tea-pot: in that valuable "tea-pot brought from Canton by uncle Robert, who had been carried up the country by a black princess, and never heard of again." Only one small handful of gold from that glorious vessel!

In sweet tranquillity Titus awaited the return of post. He received a letter in due season from his aunt. Good, kind old soul! could she do less than meet his every wish?

Titus broke the seal, and read the letter, in which Miss Virginia Trumps in the briefest manner simply inquired of her nephew, "if he was only playing a joke—or if he was really mad?"

"She doesn't mean it—no, she can't mean it,"

said Titus—"she'll write again; yes, or if not, something will happen."

And in this belief Titus was justified, for three days afterwards, he was in the Marshalsea, at the suit of Paul Tapetight, attorney-at-law.

"Hadn't you better look out for your bed?" asked a fellow-prisoner of Titus.

"You're very good—but—I shall not be here an hour—I've written to a friend—this is rather an unpleasant calamity—but something will be sure to turn up."

CHAPTER XII.

"Is there no letter to-day?" asked Titus for upwards of the thousandth time, having been three years in the gaol.

"Not to-day."

"Ha! there will be to-morrow. Oh, yes! sure to be something to-morrow."

For once, Titus was a true prophet. On the morrow, a letter, announcing the death of his aunt, with the bequest of her property to himself, enabled him again to breathe the free air, a free man.

Titus went to Gloucestershire, and married a thrifty soul, who suffered him to hope for the best, whilst she *did* for the best. Hence, Titus spent his

days in competence and peace; though, as a proof that his old failing still clung to him, it has been stated, that a neighbour once overheard him advise his little girl, whose canary had flown away, "to take the open cage into the garden—for, perhaps the bird would fly back again."

"Well, Titus, I never heard such a man as you," said Mrs. Trumps, the third cow having died—poisoned, as it was suspected, by some malicious villain—"don't I tell you the last cow is dead?"

"Never mind, my dear, I think the children are tired of milk. Besides, something will turn up. Why, my love, won't you always look at things on the bright side?"

"Bright side!" cried Mrs. Trumps, "but suppose they have no bright side?"

"Then, make one, my dear—make one," answered Titus.

"To *make* a bright side" is after all, not the worst philosophy, and such was ever the matured purpose of our last of men,—TITUS TRUMPS: THE MAN OF "MANY HOPES."

THE END.

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